LOST IN TRANSLATION?

An examination of the concept of *courtoisie*
in the Old French *Le Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and in the
corresponding Old Norse *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*.

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The illustration on the cover is taken from the site of *Tydorel* – an ensemble specializing in medieval music. Tydorel - Floire and Blancheflor [WWW] http://folk.uio.no/annahel/Tydorel/flores_en.html (27 April 2006).

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CHAPTER 1. Introduction

Topic and problem to be addressed

This thesis focuses on the concept of *courtoisie* and how it was translated from Old French into Old Norse. I will look at one romance and saga of chivalry in particular, namely *Floire et Blancheflor* and *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* respectively.

My discussion starts from the idea of a common tradition in medieval literature, originating in France and shared by other literatures of Western Europe, including Norway. During the 1200's, Norway had a rich literary tradition. Yet, the local impulses, that had led to the creation of eddas and sagas weakened, and gave way to new tendencies: one of them was hagiographical literature, common to the whole of Europe through widely occurring motifs such as holy men, holy women or holy events. The second tendency started with *The Song of Roland* in France, and it spread all over Europe. The heroic accounts of *The Song of Roland* were shortly followed by the romances of *courtoisie*. Chrétien de Troyes' romances are considered to be the inspiration for many translations and adaptations into a number of European languages. The romance which was turned into a saga of chivalry has been defined by Jean-Luc Leclanche (1986) as a *roman pré-courtois* (pre-courtly romance) from the twelfth century. Yet it has many *courtois* elements and it was turned into a saga of chivalry at the same time as all the other sagas during the reign of Haakon Haakonsson. It is not specified, as in the introduction of the other five sagas – *Tristams saga ok Isöndar*, *Möttuls saga*, *Ívens saga*, *Strengleikar* and *Elis saga ok Rosamundu* – whether it was Brother Robert who performed the translation, but it is believed to be the work of a cleric, considering its general ecclesiastic tone.

I have chosen this romance and saga in particular because there are not so many studies of this type, which is probably due to the fact that sources do not specify whether it was commissioned by king Haakon Haakonsson or not. In addition, it is my intention to prove that the concept of *courtoisie* is only partially lost in the translation. To support my opinions, I have done a close comparative analysis between the romance and the saga and I have supported my empirical results with Daniel Sävborg's (2005) theory on the issue of *courtly love*. *Courtoisie* is a concept that involves a broader reference than just that of *courtly love*, and I will discuss what elements of the concept in particular are lost or what they are replaced by. In this attempt, I consider it important to define both the social and the historical context in which such a phenomenon took place. Using translation theory, and especially theories on medieval translation, I will give arguments for my assumption that the

concept of *courtoisie* actually underwent a transformation. At the same time, I will look at transformations that occured in the written tradition of medieval Norway and identify the factors that might have contributed to these transformations. The main focus, though, will lie on whether or not *courtoisie* was one of these factors. The assumed transformation of the concept will be examined in relation to a change in mentality and life style.

The idea of relating the concept of *courtoisie* to a transformation in the French and Norwegian societies comes from the article: *Vues sur les conceptions courtoises dans les littératures d'oc et d'oïl au XIIe siècle* (1959) written by the French medievalist Jean Frappier.[1] According to Frappier, the *courtois* ideal is born and spreads in the twelfth century in France both as a social and a literary phenomenon. The ideal corresponds to a turning point in society and to a new style of life.

The translation of courtly literature into Norwegian started at the court of king Haakon Haakonsson of Norway. The philologist Bjarne Fidjestøl suggested that the translation of the courtly romances, i.e. *romans courtois*, may be seen against the background of literary sociology, and more specifically, the appearance of a reading public in Norway (Fidjestøl 1997: 360). In the European literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the feudal society was represented with the king's court on top of the social hierarchy. Fidjestøl considered that king Haakon either used the translated stories as a tool to legitimize the top social position of his own court, or as a "mirror to be held against the nobility, presenting them with an ideal" (op.cit.: 364-365). A relevant composition in this respect is *The King's Mirror* (*Konungs Skuggsjá*), written in the early thirteenth century as a "hand-book" in the form of a father's advice to his young son.

In chapter 2, I will introduce and discuss the sources. Further on, in chapter 3, I will introduce the theories and present the methods I am using. An overview of previous studies will also be included in this chapter. The historical, social and cultural context of the thesis will be dealt with in chapter 4. Here I will look at both France and Norway, the latter both under king Haakon Haakonsson and his grandson king Haakon V Magnusson. The reason for extending the period from 1217 until 1319 is that a later translation of *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* into Old Swedish had been commissioned by Haakon V Magnusson's wife, Queen Eufemia. These two reigns marked the beginning and the end of the so-called *golden age* in medieval Norwegian history. In chapter 5, I will define and examine the concepts I am working with, both the French and the corresponding Norse ones. Chapter 6 is the analysis itself. Taking the definition of *courtoisie* as a starting point, I will divide the

[1] The title of the article in English is: *Views on the concepts of courtoisie in the literature of the regions of Oc and Oïl in the twelfth century*.

analysis into sub-chapters in which all the elements of the definition will be analysed comparatively. In chapter 7, I will draw the conclusions of my present study.

CHAPTER 2. Sources. Overview and interpretation of the sources

2.1. The aim of this study

The aim of this study is to concentrate on the concept of *courtoisie* in both the Old French and the Old Norse versions of the story of Floire and Blancheflor and to see how this concept is perceived in two different cultural contexts. *The Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* precedes in date the work of Chrétien de Troyes and of his thirteenth-century followers. In his book *Medieval Scandinavia. An Encyclopedia*, Birte Carlé (1993: 200) reviews *Flóres Saga ok Blankiflúr* as a Christian romance about the young, loving couple Flóres and Blankiflúr. The saga was probably translated into Old Norwegian prose between 1220 and 1230. The source of the saga, *The Conte de Floire et Blancheflor,* is a French romance composed around 1150 in in octosyllabic rhymes (couplets) by a French cleric, a so called Tourangeau (from Tour), supposedly Robert D'Orbigny (Leclanche 2003) in the milieu around Eleanor of Aquitaine, close to the Capetian monarchy.[2] Carlé suggests that the story became a medieval bestseller, considering the amount of translations that exist in the vernacular languages of Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, the Netherlands and other countries. Quoting Jean-Luc Leclanche, Carlé further suggests that the final part of the Old Norse saga, from the single combat onward, differs from the original French tale. This difference is due most likely to influence from European translations of the second French version of *Floire et Blancheflor* around 1200 (Carlé 1993: 200). Yet, the end of the second version of the romance is not available in any manuscript, and we cannot draw the conclusion that the end of the saga originated in this second version.

This parallel study will focus mainly on the concept of *courtoisie* in the process of the translation from the source language, i.e. Old French, into the target language, Old Norse. Although the main focus is specifically linguistic, it is impossible to separate language from culture. I will therefore discuss the complexities of translation as a cultural act, as well.

Along with the theme of love, the romance and the saga are also concerned with the conversion of Muslims to Christianity and the Christian expansion in Europe and beyond. Christianity was seen as the right religion at that time, and the Emperor Charlemagne,

[2] In a critical edition of *Le Conte de Floire and Blancheflor* (manuscript A, BNF, fr. 375), Jean-Luc Leclanche claims that Robert d'Orbigny is the author of the account.

whose fictional genealogy is established in the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* (further referred to as *Conte*) became a major figure in the literature about the Spanish Reconquista and an important theme of medieval French literature.[3] It is common for the contemporary *chansons de geste* genre to use war and violence as the main medium of conversion. However, in the *Conte* and *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, the medium used is love.

2.2. A brief presentation of the plot

The plot of the story can briefly be outlined as follows: Blancheflor's/ Blankiflúr's mother is taken prisoner on her pilgrimage to Compostela in Spain, and Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr is brought up together with Floire/ Flóres at the royal court of Flóres' father. The couple Floire/ Flóres and Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr love each other, but the king does not want his son to marry the daughter of a Christian prisoner. While Floire/ Flóres is away to school, the king sells Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr and sees to it that she is transported to the king of Babylon. Floire/ Flóres finds out that she was kidnapped and sets out to find her. He travels a long way successfully. He arrives at the time when Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr was about to be compelled to marry the emir. She is kept in a tower together with other maids.

In the Old French romance, the emir is deeply moved by the love Floire and Blancheflor show for each other and he decides to forgive them. Then he declares Floire knight and allows him to marry Blancheflor. At the same time, the emir marries Gloris, Blancheflor's fellow maid. At the request of Floire and Blancheflor, the emir promised not to kill Gloris after one year, as he used to do with all his wives. On his return home, Floire and his people convert to Christianity, then Blancheflor's mother marries a duke and finally regains her happiness.

In the saga, after a single, victorious combat against one of the emir's knights, Flóres returns home, is proclaimed king and marries Blankiflúr. At Blankiflúr's initiative, Flóres and his people adopt Christianity. The couple end their days in a nunnery and a monastery, and their sons assume rule of the kingdom.

2.3. Origin and nature of the story of Floire and Blancheflor

According to Jean-Luc Leclanche (2003), this is a version of the Arabian Nights 'á la française', its main source being probably the Arabian tale of *Noam* and *Neema,* which has the same narrative scheme as the *Conte.* Considering *the Conte*'s further similarities with a

[3] The Arabic armies arrived in Spain in 711 and large parts of Spain remained under Arabic rule for most of the medieval period, i.e until the fall of the emirate of Granada in 1492. Arabic Spain was known as Al-Andalus, and the struggle for its Christian reconquest was one of the major preoccupations of Western Christian society.

Persian tale, *Varquah and Golshâh*, one can assume the existence of a lost Oriental tale that caused the separate development of the *Conte* and *Noam*. The themes and motifs were popular for the twelfth century, before the surge of Breton 'fashion'. In his search for Blancheflor, Floire travels from Spain to Babylon, a geographic itinerary well known during the 1100's. Leclanche (1986) assumes that this quest is, for heroes in search of love, a conquest of one's own personality and an initiation at the end of which he appeared as a prototype of the Christian prince-cleric capable of assuming the heritage of the antiquity and of achieving the ideological illusion of his age: the ecumenical fusion of Christianity and Paganism.

The time and the space of the story are both mythical and real. The author has referred to common places and traditions, especially to the Genesis, but he has also given precise descriptions of the voyage to Egypt. The toponymy is ambiguous, and names like the Babylon, Baudas (Baghdad) and the Euphrate, evoke, in fact, Cairo, Alexandria and the Nile. The fusion between the ancient world of pagans and that of the contemporary Christians, namely of Saint Jacob of Compostella and of the Reconquista, calls for such geographical ambiguity, as Leclanche (2003: XXI) asserts. The story unfolds against the geographical background of Spain and the East. Niebla (Naples) was one of the remaining Moor city-kingdoms weakened by the Reconquista in the twelfth century. France, the birthplace of Blancheflor's mother and Germany, the country of Gloris, Blancheflor's companion in the Tower are also evoked.

The account is rooted in the Roman Empire, in the time of Caesar (and through him, of all emperors of Rome) as the last legitimate heir of the goblet. Exchanging the goblet for Blancheflor expressed the commercial nature of the eastern civilization, of the Saracens that both fascinated and excited the aversion of the Christian West.

2.4. The theme of love in the *Conte* and the saga

The concept of love in this romance is of a slightly different nature than in other romances from the same period. In the descriptions of Floire and Blancheflor the concept of love operates by underlining the similarity between them. Both the boy and the girl have blond hair and look so similar that when Floire travels to Babylon in search of his beloved, his lack of appetite and sad face remind his hosts of Blancheflor, who had stayed with them earlier. He is even mistaken for her twin brother. There are many coincidences that bring the two children together. All of them have Christian connotations: both mothers give birth to their babies on the same day, and in commemoration of that day they are given similar names. The names of the couple are explained by the fact that the Christian Blancheflor

(white flower) and the pagan Floire (flower) were both born on Palm Sunday, the day on which Catholics carry blessed branches and flowers. They fall in love early, soon after they are sent to study at the age of five. When Floire is sent away to Montoire, he is unable to remember his lessons. When informed of the death of his beloved, he suffers greatly and wishes to kill himself in order to join Blancheflor in the afterlife. These symptoms of lovesickness, which occur when the children are separated by force, make them appear even more alike. When the two are discovered together in the *Tower of Maidens*, the emir and his entourage take them for twins or a couple of identically beautiful girls. The couple's freedom and their final union depend entirely on this perfect similarity and equality.

Natasha Romanova discusses an interesting theory about the love between Floire and Blancheflor. She argues that their love is linked to education and can be understood only in relation to this process. Certain aspects of their emotions come to them naturally whereas others have to be learned. Education transforms childhood attachment into erotic love (Romanova 2004: 7). The idea of linking love and education is suggested by books and reading. According to Romanova, they have the role of instructing Floire and Blancheflor so that knowledge of the name and theory of love will lead to experience and will transform childish emotions into love.

Another element to be taken into consideration when we refer to the love between Floire and Blancheflor is the love setting, or the *locus amœnus.* This motif creates a metaphorical relationship between love and childhood through associating both with nature (Romanova 2004: 10). According to Ernst Robert Curtius' definition, the minimal ingredients of a *locus amœnus*, or description of a setting for a love story in classical and medieval literature, comprise a tree (or several trees), a meadow and a spring or brook (Curtius 1953: 195). The natural love setting in the *Conte* is the garden. There are three gardens in the story: that belonging to Floire's father, King Félis, the one around Blancheflor's false tomb and the garden belonging to the emir of Babylon. It seems that the usual aspects of nature as time, change, decay and especially the natural change of seasons do not exist in the romance. It is always spring here and trees are in blossom. Myrrha Lot-Borodine notices the treatment of the seasons and argues that, in the *Conte*, the eternal spring is a metaphor for the couple's spring of heart (Lot-Borodine 1913: 6)[4]. The eternal spring recalls medieval poetry when the joy of awakening nature is either compared to or

[4] Lot-Borodine argues in her 1913 monograph *Le Roman idyllique en France au moyen âge*, that the so-called aristocratic French version of Floire and Blancheflor belonged to and also constituted the model for a sub-genre of medieval French romance which she calls idyllic romance (*roman idyllique*). These works are united by the theme of *idyllic childhood*, that is by the description of a boy and a girl who grow up together, fall in love, and after a number of trials get married.

contrasted with the lover's sentiments. Throughout the narrative of the *Conte* springtime and flowers create an atmosphere of harmony and are linked to the idyllic theme.

2.5. The French *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and the existing manuscripts

The Old French romance of *Floire et Blancheflor* is extant in four complete manuscripts and a fragmentary one, designated A, B, C, D and V. These manuscripts are: *Fonds français nr. 375* (A), dated 1288; *Fonds Français nr. 1447* (B), first half of the fourteenth century; *Fonds Français nr. 12562* (C), fourteenth-fifteenth century; *Fonds Français nr. 19152* (D), thirteenth century and Vatican, *Palatinus, lat. 1971* (V), a fragment of 1156 lines, early thirteenth century. A, B, C and D are in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, V is in the Vatican Library.[5] These manuscripts represent two different versions of the Old French romance. The first, which is referred to here as FB1, is represented by the manuscripts A, B, C and V. The second version, FB2, is represented by manuscript D. The differences between the two versions, as de Vries underlines, are considerable: FB1, which was probably composed about the middle of the twelfth century is a *roman idyllique*, while FB2 is the transformation of the former into a typical *roman d'aventures*. The two terms, *roman idyllique* and *roman d'aventures* are used by Margaret Pelan (1975) to indicate two specific genres. They are preferred to the terms used by older editors, like Édélestand du Méril *version aristocratique* and *version populaire*, implying two kinds of audience (1856). De Vries suggests that such terms should be avoided since we know almost nothing about the medieval audience. De Vries adds another important comment concerning the value of the manuscripts containing FB1, namely that there is general agreement that C is valueless from the point of view of textual history, as it is probably a bad copy of A. Choosing out of the remaining two either A or B was a matter of dispute. Thus Margaret Pelan's edition is based on B, while other editors, like Immanuel Bekker, Edélestand du Méril, W. Wirtz, and Felicitas Krüger chose A. As for the less known manuscript of FB1 (V), it was not known to the nineteenth century editors of the *Conte* as it was discovered fairly recently. This seems to be fragmentary and more closely related to AC than B. Pelan does not mention when it was discovered (de Vries 1966: 54).

A more recent and synoptical edition is Jean-Luc Leclanche's *Contribution à l'étude de la transmission des plus anciennes oeuvres romanesques françaises, un cas privilégié*: *Floire et Blancheflor,* edited in 1980 and presenting manuscripts A, B and V in parallell columns. Since this is the most recent edition, I will base my statements and the analysis on

[5] All the details concerning the numbering of manuscripts are taken from Franciscus C. de Vries (1966).

Leclanche's work.[6] He introduces the opposition *conte*/ *roman*, which marks another difference between the two versions. As I mentioned above, there are two other ways of denominating these versions. All three groups of terms: *version aristocratique*/ *version populaire* or of the jongleurs (du Méril), *roman idyllique*/ *roman d'aventures* (Pelan) and *conte*/ *roman* (Leclanche). They represent three theories on how the romance spread and evolved. Although called *popular* and *aristocratic*, both versions were produced in aristocratic environments, but the so-called aristocratic version exalts clerical values, whereas the second, popular version is definitely chivalric. The two romances represent (Leclanche 2003: XXV) the two sides of a debate between the cleric and the knight.

The story of Floire and Blancheflor had a tremendous success since it first appeared and until the beginning of the fourteenth century. It is mentioned at least seventeen times by the troubadours. This led to a hypothesis that even an Occitan romance might have existed (Leclanche 2003: XXV). Then, an anonymous trouvère composed the second version of *Floire et Blanchefleur*, of which there is only a copy whose end is missing. An examination of its text proves that the author had a copy of the *Conte* at his disposal. According to Leclanche (2003: XXV), FB2 (which I will also abridge *the Romance*) is a negative *Conte.* Floire is presented as man-of-arms interested in sword fighting and indifferent to the clergy, while Blancheflor is exactly the opposite of the active and appealing character she is in the *Conte*.

Leclanche (1980: vol II pp. 46-55) asserts that Edmond Faral could not establish the country of the scribe of manuscript D, hesitating between Île-de-France and Picardy. Leclanche's opinion is that the language in FB2 bears characteristics of both east and northeast.

Since FB2 took shape before the continental versions, the influence must have come from the former to the latter. The copyist might have been inspired to include the description of the cenotaph (Pelan 1975: vss. 1432-1463) and to anchor the legend of Floire in that of Bertha Bigfoot and Charlemagne from the lost end of *the Romance*. In other words, it seems that *the Romance* borrowed from the continental version of the *Conte* the idea of the hero's Carolingian posterity. This link with the legend of Charlemagne proves that *the Romance* is strongly influenced by the *chansons de geste*.

The authors of other versions, like the low-German *Flos und Blankeflos*, and the Italian *Cantare di Fiorio y Biancifiore*, the latter from the thirteenth century, seems to have been the creation of an author who read both the *Conte* and the *Romance.* In turn, the

[6] The debate with regard to which edition is more reliable is a serious one, but it does not make the subject of my study.

Cantare was the source of Boccacio's *Il Filocopo* or *Il Filocolo*, and both versions led to plenty of translations into Greek, Spanish, Czech, Yiddish and French.

2.6. The translated *Flóres saga og Blankiflúr* and the existing manuscripts

Although it is not consigned that *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* was translated at the court of King Haakon Haakonsson, it is believed (Leclanche 2003) that the translation was carried out in that environment during the 1220's, probably as part of the educational programme Haakon Haakonsson is known for. Many other works, whose manuscripts must have come from England, especially *Tristan* and the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, were translated into Old Norse. The Anglo-Norman manuscript V is believed to be the closest to the original romance and the source manuscript for the Norse translator. Unlike the original *Conte*, the end of the saga has a strong chivalric character. In turn, the saga was translated into Swedish at the court of Haakon Haakonsson's grandson Haakon V Magnusson and his wife, queen Eufemia. The Swedish version was later adapted into Danish. The same romance was translated, quite faithfully, into Middle English, before the end of the thirteenth century. This version is known as *Floris and Blauncheflur.* The Old Norse, Middle English, Swedish and Danish versions together with the Anglo-Norman manuscript V constitute the insular version.

The continental version is characterized by additions which complied with the taste of the moment and reiterations: elaborate descriptions of the garden of king Félis (cf. the garden of the emir), of the cenotaph and automaton (cf. description of Babylon, the *Tower of Maidens* and the artificial birds); amplification in the description of the floral motif, of the vigilant and brutal gatekeeper and in the enumeration of the gifts given to Daire; the attachment of the work in the Charlemagne cycle. This version was far more successful than the insular one. The romances of two of the first translators, the Flemish Diederic van Assenede (thirteenth century) and the German Konrad Fleck (beginning of the thirteenth century) are turned into prose (a German *Volksbuch* and a Flemish *Voelksboek*). There is also a low-Rhenish fragmentary version, *Floyris*, dated before 1200, probably before Fleck's translation (Leclanche 2003: XXV).

The only surviving Old Norse version is one fragment, NRA 65, from the early fourteenth century. Its text seems to be the closest to the original translation. Other Icelandic manuscripts are AM 575a 4to (fragmentary) and AM 489 4to, both from the fourteenth century (Carlé 1993: 200). It is not known who was the cleric who translated the romance.

The Old Norse primary source used in this comparison is the edition of Eugen Kölbing, *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* (1896). I have also consulted the edition of Brynjolf

Snorrason, *Saga af Flóres ok Blankiflúr* (1850). Snorrason's edition is based on AM 489 4to, whereas Kölbing's is based on the fragmentary manuscript AM 575a 4to with additions from both AM 489 4to and NRA 65.

2.7. Versions and their adaptations in other vernacular languages

The popularity of the story is attested by almost fifteen foreign versions of both the *Conte* and *the Romance*, of translations into modern French, English and Norwegian, among others, and of just as many works that derived from the medieval legend. Altogether there are around thirty successors of the story.[7]

Leclanche (1980: 83-86) classified the foreign versions by generations related directly to a French original of the *Conte*. He placed *the Romance* on the same level as the translations in the first generation. The second generation includes new translations and adaptations founded on the first generation and on *the Romance* and so on. Another criterion in this classification was the faithfulness of the versions. Theoretically, original traits could be distinguished among witnesses that are closest to the original in time, i.e. first generation, but practically, certain versions in the third generation could be more useful than some of the first, especially if the latter proved to be more innovative. As a result, Leclanche's classifications is as follows:

First generation, useful versions:

- *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* – anonymous translation into Old Norse from the beginning of the thirteenth century, mainly represented by the Icelandic manuscripts.
- *Floris and Blauncheflur* – anonymous translation into Middle-English from the thirteenth century.
- *Floris ende Blancefloer* – translation into Middle-Dutch by the trouvère Diederic van Assenede who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century.

First generation, other versions:

- *Flore und Blanscheflur* – amplified translation into Middle High German by the trouvère Konrad Fleck during the thirteenth century.

[7] Besides Leclanche's translation of the *Conte* into modern French, there is also an edition signed by S. Hannedouche (1971). The English translation of the *Conte* belongs to M. J. Hubert (1966). These two translations are referred to by Leclanche in his 1980 synoptical edition of the romance. These editions have not been available during the writing of this thesis. The translation into modern Norwegian of the *Conte* belongs to Olaug Berdal (1985).

- *Floyris* – an anonymous version in a low-Rhenish dialect, supposedly from the end of the twelfth century. Only a few fragments of this version have come down to us.

Second generation (versions derived from the first generation or from *the Romance*).
Useful versions for the study of the *Conte*:
- *Flores och Blanzeflor* – anonymous translation into Swedish verse, from 1312. The translation is based on the Old Norse saga.
- *De Historie van Floris ende Blancefleur* (*Volksboek*) – a prose version of Diederic's Dutch romance from the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Useful versions for the study of *the Romance*:
- *Cantare di Fiorio e Biancifiore* – composed by an anonymous poet in a dialect of north Italy, in the first half of the thirteenth century. The Italian poet used both French versions.

Second generation, other versions:
- *Flos unde Blankflos* – anonymous romance in Middle Low German from the fourteenth century, a free adaptation of the *Conte*, contaminated also by *the Romance*.
- *Florus und Pantschiflur* (*Zurich Volksbuch*) – a prose version of Fleck's romance.

Third generation:
- *Eventyret om Flores og Blantzeflores* – Danish version dated towards the end of the fourteenth century, simple linguistic adaptation of the Swedish romance.
- *Filocolo* – Boccacio's early vernacular prose romance composed before 1338. The source is probably *Cantare*.
- *Phlorios and Platzia Phlore* – Greek medieval romance in *political* verse, derived from *Cantare*.

Fourth generation:
- *La Historia de los dos enamorados Flores y Blancaflor* – anonymous Spanish romance known through the so-called Alcala edition from 1512. It derives from *Cantare* and could be a part of the third generation, but it is placed here because of contaminations from *Filocolo.*
- *Ein gar schone newe hystori der hochen lieb des koniglichen fursten Florio und von seiner lieben Bianceffora* (*Volksbuch of Metz*) – popular German version in prose, derived from *Filocolo* and known from the incunable of Metz (1499) and from the editions of Munich (1500) and Strasbourg (1530).

- *Le Philocope de Messire Jehan Boccace Florentin, contenant l'histoire de Fleury et Blanchefleur* – a French translation by Adrien Sevin from 1510. Numerous editions appeared in the sixteenth century.

Fifth generation:

- *L'Histoire amoureuse de Flores et Blanchefleur s'amye* – translation of the Spanish chronicle by Jacques Vincent, first printed in 1554 in Paris. Numerous editions followed in Anvers (1561), Lyon (1570, 1571), Rouen (1594).
- *Aventures de Flores et de Blanchefleur* – another translation into French of the Spanish romance, printed in Paris 1735.
- *Welmi piekna nowa kronika aneb historia wo welike milosti Kniezete a Kraale Floria z historia a geho milee pânie Biantzforze* – Czech translation of Volksbuch of Metz, derived from Filocolo and printed in 1519.
- *Liebschaft von Floris und Flancfler* – Yiddish translation mentioned by J. Chr. Wolf in 1715 in *Bibliotheca Hebraea.*

Leclanche's classification is far from being complete. To the titles above, one must add the works directly inspired by the legend, such as the Icelandic *Reinalds Rimur* or the *Leggenda della Reina Rosana e di Rosana la sua Figliula* as well as all translations into modern languages. Also similar to the story of Floire and Blancheflor is the tale of *Aucassin et Nicolette.*

The insular versions related to manuscript V are *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, *Flores och Blanziflor* and the Middle-English *Floris and Blauncheflur.*

Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* and *Flores och Blanziflor

The approximate date when a manuscript of the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* was introduced at the court of Haakon Haakonsson was 1220-1230. Haakon Haakonsson had contacts with Angevin England and the manuscripts most probably came from there, through Mathew Paris, who visited the Norwegian court in 1248 (Leclanche 1980, Jónas Kristjánsson 1997). The information provided by *Tristams saga ok Isöndar*, namely that the translation was done in 1226 by Brother Robert, an Anglo-Norman according to Leclanche (1980: vol II, p. 80), is tempting with regard to placing the translation of the *Conte* very close to the same date. Considering the popularity of the couple among both audience and authors, it is possible that the translation existed by the end of the 1240's.

During the fourteenth century, queen Eufemia had the initiative to translate *Flóres saga* into Swedish verse. There are certain details in the Swedish romance which prove that

the Swedish poet had a better manuscript at his disposal than the existing Icelandic manuscripts. By studying Kölbing's notes, one realizes that the Swedish text is often closer to the French *Conte*. A plausible theory is that the French manuscript, which was the source of the Norse translation, remained at the library of the royal court (Leclanche 1980: vol. II, p. 98). Besides, the Swedish romance is in verse, just like the French one.

The saga is in general a faithful translation of the French romance, except for the end, starting with the trial of the couple. In the saga, Flóres participates in a single combat in which his mother's ring proves useful and he wins over his opponent, a knight, thus defending his right. The sweethearts get married on their return to Spain and then they travel to Rome and Paris where Flóres converts. When he is back in Spain again, he baptizes all his people. The Swedish translator has kept the same end, which proves that it is not an invention of a late scribe, but that it was in fact the original form of the saga (Leclanche 1980: vol. II, p. 99).

The saga and the Swedish romance *Flores och Blanziflor* ignore the interpolations that characterize the continental versions (the garden and the cenotaph). Thus they are closer to the Middle English *Floris* and to the French ms. V. The tendency to shorten the lyrical passages is found in both the English *Floris*, in the saga and the Swedish romance: the episode with Floire in Montoire, Floire's *planctus*, the description of the palfrey, the encounter with Daire. On the other hand, the saga is more faithful to the *Conte* with regard to the narrative parts and the dialogues. Leclanche's theory (1980: vol. II, p. 99) is that the Norse author had fewer restrictions while translating into prose than the author of the Middle English romance. The two successive prologues that appear in manuscripts A and B (the hero's posterity and the young ladies' chamber) are ignored in the saga and in the Swedish *Flores.* The other insular versions are acephalic, and this detail is therefore important to consider. Besides, the Scandinavian versions (the *Flóres saga* and the Swedish *Flores*) together with the French manuscript B, Diederic, Boccaccio (*Filocolo*) identify Ovid as the author of the pagan book the children read: *De arte amandi*. The text of ms. B is altered by a later scribe and the name Ovid is added as a result of this alteration. One possible explanation could be that the name of the Latin poet automatically came into the minds of both Diederic and the Norse translator, when they read the allusive text of mss. A and V. Another explanation could be that the numerous manuscripts that reached both authors might have had a marginal reference to Ovid (Leclanche 1980: vol II, p. 100).

The Middle-English Floris and Blauncheflur

The romance composed in the thirteenth century by a poet from South-East Midlands is kept in four fragmentary manuscripts. The eldest manuscript is dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century by Franciscus Catharina de Vries (1966). The debate on which French manuscript the Middle English romance had most affinities with was intense before Leclanche and de Vries. Yet, the absence of the descriptions of king Félis' garden and of the cenotaph from the English *Floris* was interpreted as the same reducing tendency typical of V. In general, there are major resemblances between *Floris* and V, but no significant common variants between *Floris* an mss. AB. Still, there are at least two additions typical of the Anglo-Norman ms. V, which are absent from the English *Floris*. These are the queen's advice and the scene where Floire speaks to Blancheflor's mother.

The relationship between *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* and *Floris and Blauncheflur*

Franciscus Catharina de Vries (1966) reveals some textual resemblances between the saga and *Floris.* One of them is in the episode when the merchants give Blancheflor to the emir. The French text says about the emir that: "a fin or l'a .VII. foiz pesée" (ms. B vs. 507, cf. ms. A vs. 522 and ms. V vs. 387). The English *Floris* adds "as she stood vpryzt" (E 195), while the saga keeps the same image: "sem hon stóð" (as she stood upright AM 575a 4to, VII, 10). This is an idiom that both cultures must have had in common, considering the commercial and linguistic contacts established between the Norwegians and the English. The phrase meant "which equalled the weight of her body" and one hypothesis could be that an alteration of the French sub-archetype might have led to similar translations (Leclanche 1980: vol II, p. 101).

One other resemblance between the saga and the English *Floris* is in the episode where Floire gives his host in Baudas a coat and a cup because the latter mentions Blancheflor and tells him that she was taken to Babylon. Blancheflor is mentioned in the French mss. B 1279 and V 1017. The order in which these events take place in the French romance differs from the order in which they take place in the saga and the English *Floris*. In the French romance the order is the following: the host mentions Blancheflor's name, Floire asks him about her destination, the host answers Babylon and in the end Floire gives the host a coat and a cup. In the saga and the English *Floris*, the order is: the host mentions Blancheflor, Floire gives him the coat, Floire asks about the destination and the host answers Babylon. Since no other French or foreign version use the same order as the saga and the English *Floris*, it must be a common fault. Accordingly, there is a certain faulty sub-archetype manuscript where both *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* and *Floris and Blauncheflur*

derive from. This faulty sub-archetype must supposedly be the opposite of another sub-archetype where mss. A and B derived from (Leclanche 1980: vol II, pp. 103-104). As we have seen above, the Saga's affinities with ms. V are evident (ibid. 90), so the faulty sub-archetype that led to the translation of the saga and the English *Floris* must have derived from the same archetype as V.

The continental versions are those derived from mss. A and B of the French *Conte*. These are Konrad Fleck's *Flore und Blanscheflur* and Diederic van Assenede's *Floris ende Blancefloer* (ibid. 106). Fleck's romance, considerably extended to 8006 verses (cf. the original of approximately 3000) was a relatively free composition. Elements that prove the affinity with mss. A and B are: the prologues including the Carolingian posterity of the hero, the chamber of the young ladies, the description of king Félis' garden and the extended description of Blancheflor's cenotaph. Diederic van Assenede, an otherwise unknown Flemish trouvère, was much more brief than Fleck in his composition (approximately 3972 verses). Diederic's romance seems more faithful to the original French than Fleck's.

The other foreign versions are not very relevant to my study. Yet one remark is needed, namely that the romance written in a low-Rhenish dialect, *Floyris*, is the eldest witness of the legend that exists, i. e. approximately 1170 (ibid. 108). Unfortunately, the romance is fragmentary, and this renders its study deceiving.

CHAPTER 3. Theory and method

3.1. Theories

3.1.1.Translatio studii. Translatio imperii. Translation theory in the Middle Ages

The widespread historiographical notions of *translatio studii* and *translatio imperii*, involve a translation of empire as well as learning, or rather the inexorable movement of learning and power from ancient Troy to Greece to Rome and then to Europe, as Christopher Baswell (2000) puts it in his article *Marvels of translation and crises of transition in the romances of Antiquity*. The cleric's vernacular retelling of stories from learned Latin sources serves an aristocratic society's sense of its heroic past and its current political destiny, even shaping the former to underwrite the latter (Baswell 2000: 31). Baswell underlines two other aspects of the romances of antiquity. First, they offer a way of looking through the mirror of the past at a range of ways in which social order turned into a new form characterized by new modes of power, possessions and their transmission across generations, and the articulation of women's power in this world. Second, the romances enact a new sense of how the most intimate experience of love and eroticism interacts with the experience and

shape of the public world (id.). All these aspects are important in my discussion of *courtoisie*, its implications and consequences for the medieval society of Europe in general, and of France and Norway in particular.

Of particular importance in the present thesis is the shrine of St. James the Apostle at Santiago de Compostella, which was one of the principal European pilgrimage sites of the Middle Ages. Félis (Felix), the Saracen king took Blancheflor' mother captive while she and her father, a courtly knight, were on their way to Santiago de Compostella, to worship at the shrine of St. James. In the narrow streets around the cathedral every European vernacular and regional dialect could be heard. In the introduction to *The Medieval Translator*, Rosalynn Voaden suggests that, united by their common aspiration for spiritual rewards, or, equally possible, for secular pleasures, the pilgrims overcame the barriers of language in whatever creative ways they could (Voaden 2003: xix). I therefore find appropriate to place the transmission of tales such as *Floire et Blancheflor* in such a context. We know from Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, that the pilgrims, who come from all layers of society, told stories to each other to kill time while they travelled to Canterbury. This must have been common on the way to any other pilgrimage site, including Santiago de Compostella, even before Chaucer wrote his tales that is between 1387 and 1400.

Translation in the Middle Ages can be considered from the following perspective: new readership, combined with new norms on translation, justify re-translations. While the cultural, linguistic, and political context may account for the practice of re-translation, the search for quality, the need for more lexical precision and for new words, or the desire to go back to better, more reliable sources, should also be considered (Voaden 2003: xx).

The controversy surrounding the translation of the scriptures into various vernacular languages stands as evidence that medieval writers were aware of the complex ramifications of translation. Margaret Connolly suggests that 'shaking the tree of language' provides a suitable metaphor for the translator's work. When the language is the Word and when the tree is the 'tree of knowledge' in the Garden of Eden, the metaphor may lend itself to various interpretations, she says. But shaking the tree can also be a way of harvesting God's Word by shaking it into the vernacular, thus making it accessible to all (Voaden 2003: xix).

A translator possesses the power to influence the reading of a text. Among the various techniques used by a translator in his attempt to revise texts are inserting new words or sentences, or cancelling them, and altering words by simply changing letters after erasure. All of this affects the meaning, the doctrinal content on, among others, God, sin, moral virtues, and authority within the Church. The nature of these revisions, made in the course of translation, raises questions of identity and audience, as the addressees of such

texts could have been either members of religious orders or lay people seeking spiritual guidance (Voaden 2003: xxii).

It is impossible to divorce language from culture. Powerful cultural forces are at work in the translations. Translation must be regarded as a cultural act, even when the focus seems to be specifically linguistic. The complexities of translation as a cultural act make translation the *vexed craft* of which George Steiner speaks (Steiner 1967: 246).

The present tale, *Floire et Blancheflor*, offers evidence of the complex ties between Christian and Muslim culture in the Middle Ages, particularly in places like Muslim Spain and Christian France. Sharon Kinoshita (2003) explores the links between the Christian and Islamic world in an essay included in the eighth volume of *Translating in the Middle Ages/ Traduire au Moyen Age*. In this essay she suggests that Blancheflor's enforced travels throughout the Mediterranean world, and her marriage to the converted Saracen, Floire, results in creating a part-Saracen ancestry for the legendary Charlemagne (Kinoshita 2003: xx).

Read in the light of a highly heterogenous and contestatory Middle Ages, *Floire* exemplifies the road *less* taken in medieval studies. The title stems from Joseph Bédier's theory of the origins of the *Chanson de Roland*, summerized in one line: "In the beginning was the road", meaning the pilgrimage trail to Santiago de Compostella, that is four paths, originating in France, converging in the Pyrenees, and wending their way westward to the shrine of Saint James. The theory states that *Roland* was composed by a poet of genius (possibly a cleric from one of the monasteries on this trail) to popularize various pilgrimage sites. Although interest in Bédier's theory waned, as Kinoshita underlined, the Oxford *Roland* represents cultural difference as prototypical, confirming modern assumptions on the simplicity and intransigence of medieval western conceptions of the 'Other' (Kinoshita 2003: 223). According to Kinoshita, it is easy to read a worldview conveniently summerized in Roland's resounding battle cry, 'Paien unt tort e crestiens unt dreit' (Pagans are wrong and Christians are right') (1015). It is important to bear in mind that the canonization of the *Roland* was shaped by the twin nineteenth-century obsession with nationalism and colonial expansion. One should therefore de-link the reading of medieval French texts from this context, and consider texts that show Christianity and Islam not in conflict but in political and economic contact. The twelfth-century romance *Floire et Blancheflor*, which begins on the Santiago trail is such an example of unity in the medieval Meditteranean world in the Middle Ages. The romance is contemporary with the first *romans d'antiquité* which introduce the twinned topoi of *tranlatio studii* and *imperii* into vernacular French literature. Yet *Floire* proposes an alternative *translatio*, reversing its flow from west to east, that is to

Cairo, and casting the Mediterranean not as the uncharted space of exile and conquest but as a commercial world of long-distance trade routes crossed by merchants of all confessions (Kinoshita 2003: 224).

According to Kinoshita, the historical meaning of *Floire and Blancheflor* has been rarely explored: its recirculation of conventional motifs seems to invite archetypal rather than historically situated readings (Kinoshita 2003: 225). Kinoshita quotes Philip McCaffrey who, in 'Sexual Identity in *Floire et Blancheflor* and *Ami et Amile'* the "paradoxical identity' of the two nearly indistinguishable lovers stages a 'process of self-definition', a 'quest for the discovery of identity' (id.). Kinoshita's theory is that even the most conventional motifs signify differently in different historical contexts. Furthermore, she insists that *Floire* deals with pagan culture and the problems of inter-cultural romance, and one cannot ignore the 'historical-cultural axis' of such texts, produced at the moment of most feverish cultural and economic exchanges between Arabized Europe and the rest of the continent.[8] To avoid further misconceptions, Kinoshita suggests focus on the pragmatic, ad hoc and negociated quality of the bulk of Muslim-Christian political, social and commercial interactions, and on the shared culture of syncretic forms and practices that emerged in the eleventh- and twelfth-century Mediterranean. In contrast to the lines in the *Chanson de Roland*, in which the Pyrenees symbolically demarcated Christian France from Saracen Spain and the contact between Franks and pagans was limited to the battlefield, in *Floire* it is possible to read the striking resemblance between Floire and Blancheflor as an articulation of the affinity of Christian and Muslim cultures. The similarity between the two androgynous lovers has struck researchers primarily for its collapse of gender distinctions. The transparent identity between Floire and Blancheflor in the schoolroom scene evokes a vision of medieval Arabic and Latin traditions as the twin progeny of Mediterranean antiquity (Kinoshita 2003: 227).

Flora Ross Amos (1920) traced certain developments in the theory of translation as formulated by English writers. She confined herself to suggestive statements that appear in the prefaces. Although my present thesis does not deal with English authors, I find it relevant to refer to some of her empirical results. Considering the attested contact between Norway and England during Haakon Haakonsson, I reckon it is not far-fetched to make use of her opinions. After all, the way translators worked in Norway could not have been totally different than that of the English translators'. Thus, from the comment of Anglo-Saxon writers one may derive an idea of the attitude generally prevailing in the medieval period

[8] Kinoshita's theory is also supported by McCaffrey's *Sexual Identity,* p. 135 and María Rosa Menocal's Signs of the Times: 'Self, Other and History in *Aucassin', Romantic Review*, 80 (1989), 497-99.

with regard to the treatment of material from foreign sources (Amos 1920: 3). Among the methods employed by medieval translators were sometimes word-by-word, sometimes according to the sense. The translator desires rather to be clear and simple than to adorn his style with rhetorical ornament. Instead of unfamiliar terms, he uses the pure and open words of the language of the people. The use of idioms typical of the target vernacular language is an important principle. Keeping always in mind a clear conception of the nature of his audience, the translator does whatever seems to him necessary to make his work attractive and, consequently, profitable. Abbreviation was also common of deliberate purpose. However, these were not the only theories of translation which appeared in this period. There was also a demand for greater closeness in following the originals, especially in translating the Bible. The translator who left the narrow path of word for word reproduction, was, in the early period, easily led into greater deviations from source, especially if his own creative ability came into play. Translations in this period are faithful except for the omission or addition of certain passages, compilation or epitome. Thus the work in the vernacular may often present itself as if it were an original composition. The terms used to characterize literary productions and literary processes often have not their modern connotations. *Translate* and *translation* are applied very loosely even as late as the sixteenth century. The choice of the subject to translate was largely conditioned by opportunity. The translator had to choose what was within his reach (Amos 1920: 3-12).

Another point of view belongs to Jürg Glauser (2005) who draws the attention on the importance of a theory of translation for the Norse romances. The concept of medieval translation as re-writing represents a method that can be used as a basis on which to proceed. Re-writing, thought of as continuation, writing anew or paraphrasing is precisely the word to describe the phenomena that also define the *riddarasögur* (sagas of knights). Such an approach is, according to Glauser, highly advantageous, enabling literary translations to be viewed within the framework of such a concept as part of a process of cultural appropriation, and as contributing to a discussion in the recipient culture of what that culture perceives as foreign. Argumentation using such terms as exact/correct vs. inexact/incorrect has not proved to be a productive approach to the phenomena that need to be described in this connection. The sagas of knights are an interesting example of how a dialogue was conducted in medieval Scandinavia with a foreign culture that evidently held a fascination for the Scandinavian peoples. The main question that arises while studying these sagas in the light of this theory is which elements of this new culture – whether content-related, ideological, dramatic, stylistic or other – people in the north were willing to accept, and which ones they would tend to reject. This culture, up to then largely unknown, was met

primarily in the form of ideas and conceptions presented in writing that opened up an imaginary world full of new possibilities and impossibilities. Such an approach allows for translation analyses of the kind that focus on the creative, selective appropriation of foreign cultures (Glauser 2005: 381-382).

3.1.2. Medieval narrative and narratology. Text in context

Some of the most significant patterns of romance construction, as sketched by Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner in her article *The shape of romance in medieval France,* are the segmentation of the narrative into episodes, the use of analogy to build intra-and extra-textual patterns, the interlacing of narrative segments or lines (Bruckner 2000: 22-23). The best starting point in this investigation is the genius Chrétien de Troyes who was a court poet, that is a *cleric* attached to a noble court, like Wace and Benoît de Sainte-Maure before him. Both Wace and Chrétien de Troyes were *cler lisant*, which means a school-trained man of letters whose principal job was to praise his patrons and their lineage in vernacular narratives, as well as to provide them with spiritually edifying stories (mainly, saints' lives). By Chrétien's time, that is the 1160s and 1170s, such values as *courtoisie* and *fin'amor*, as well as honourable *chevalerie* and its counterpart, had come to predominate in the aristocratic ideals of the French-speaking English nobility. Somewhat later, the value of noblesse of Continental France and Germany evolved. The clerics celebrated these values and analysed them in works of narrative. Chrétien's genius and his work, a corpus of five romances written in rhyming octosyllabic couplets during the final third of the twelfth century, provide, as Bruckner suggests, a valuable starting point in illustrating narrative techniques, as well as the works' potential for reinvention. These works are *Érec et Énide* (ca. 1165), *Cligés* (ca. 1176), *Le Chevalier de la Charrette* (*Lancelot*), *Le Chevalier au Lion* (*Yvain*) (ca. 1177) and *Le Conte du Graal* (*Perceval*) (ca. 1190). The adventures of the knightly heroes are characterized by resemblance spiced with difference (Bruckner 2000: 23).

Notwithstanding the disagreements concerning the overall design of the complex plot of the romance, Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner emphasizes some crucial aspects: romance puts together multiple stories (segments) which echo each other through analogies and the interplay of repetition and variation. The *sans* (meaning) that emerges from romance depends on our recognition and interpretation of such patterns. Romances do not make clear what meanings they offer, even though authors and narrators assure us that they do indeed produce meaning (id.).

Chrétien de Troyes explored different narrative structures in his other romances, but the model in *Erec* and *Yvain* helps make sense of many romance plots by contemporary and successive romancers: *Ipomedon*, *Florimont*, *Gliglois* and *Meraugis de Portlesguez*. Other romances offer adaptation of the model through omission and duplication. The idyllic romance that I am analysing in the present thesis, the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor*, omits the initial series of adventures, since the lovers are already united at the beginning, but subsequent events follow the same model.

Regarding the episodic organization of the romance, the basic module of the narrative structure is the self-contained episode, marked by its narrative function (hospitality, combat and so on) and typically following a standard sequence of motifs (Bruckner 2000: 24). The narrative function remains constant, and its realization in any given instance is subject to amplification and abbreviation. Thus, the hero's prowess is repeatedly demonstrated in combat, but the adversaries and beneficiaries constantly change. The juxtaposition of episodes may occasionally use the logic of causation. In general, episodic construction in romance is disjunctive, reiterative and follows a non-mimetic logic of design. The narrative structure is thus built through echoes and conventions constantly reinvented. One example in this respect is the *Tristan* romance. Once the love potion connects Tristan, Iseut and King Mark in an un-resolvable triangle with no solution but death, the intervening episodes will all follow the same pattern that moves from the separation of lovers to reunion and back to separation again, as the final act is anticipated and deferred (id.).

Another important technique for linking episodes is interlacing. The device is used in all five of Chrétien's romances, and not only does it achieve narrative goals of creating suspense or handling multiple lines of plot, but it also offers potential commentaries on the characters by weaving together episodes or narrative segments. A typical example of interlacing is in *Le Chevalier au Lion* when Yvain agrees to defend Lunete in a judicial combat against her three accusers, but he must first seek hospitality for the night. There he agrees to defend his host's family against a giant before leaving the next morning for Laudine's castle, where he will arrive just in time to save Lunete from being burned at the stake (Bruckner 2000: 24-25).

3.2. Method

3.2.1. State of the art

The topic of *courtoisie* is broad, and many scholars have turned their attention towards it in the course of time. The most important studies belong to Jean Frappier (1973), Moshé Lazar

(1964, 1989) and C. Stephen Jaeger (1985), to mention a few. I have referred to the relevant aspects of their studies in order to create the necessary theoretical framework for answering the question that gives the title of my dissertation, namely if the concept of *courtoisie* is lost in the translation from the Old French into the Old Norse. To be able to answer this question I have also made use of early theories of translation and especially of studies belonging to Flora Ross Amos (1920) or Jürg Glauser (2005).

To come a step closer to the romance and the saga that are the subject of my study I have looked at what other comparative studies have been done before. The most noteworthy of them belong to Jean-Luc Leclanche (1980, 2003) and Geraldine Barnes (1974). Other scholars have focussed on one version of the story, like for instance Patricia E. Grieve's (1997) study of one of the two extant Spanish versions of Floire and Blancheflor, or Franciscus Catharina de Vries' study (1966) of the Middle-English romance of *Floris and Blauncheflur*.

Before Leclanche and Barnes, studies on the rich European tradition of the legend of Floire and Blancheflor were undertaken by M. Édèlestand Du Méril, Immanuel Bekker, W. Wirtz, and Felicitas Krüger. The contributions of the above-mentioned consist mainly of editing the manuscripts A, B and C of the romance. There were also comparative studies between the various versions, as those belonging to H. Sundmacher, Hans Herzog and Joachim Reinhold.[9] The Anglo-Norman manuscript V was found in 1916, and the saga's affinity with it became obvious. Yet, the condition in which the manuscript was found, without beginning and without the episodes following the arrival in Cairo, makes it difficult to claim with certainty in which category it can be placed. The general assumption in this respect remains that it belongs to the same family as the Norse saga and the Middle-English *Floris and Blauncheflur*. The most recent study that includes both a synoptical edition of all existing manuscripts of the romance and a philological analysis of the relationship between manuscripts and between manuscripts and the corresponding insular and continental traditions belongs to Jean-Luc Leclanche (1980). His two-volumes study lays special focus on the romance, but it pays equal attention on the other versions and their relationship to the romance manuscripts, as it results from the chapter on sources and source interpretation. I have used Leclanche's synoptical edition of manuscripts in my comparative analysis, as I found it very useful with regard to finding out where and how the concept of *courtoisie* was used. Leclanche's study also includes critical notes to the edited manuscripts and an edition of the second version of the romance. This edition is the same as the one belonging to

[9] The researchers that wrote on the topic before Leclanche are quoted from his study (1980).

Margaret Pelan, which the saga does not have anything in common with, in spite of the chivalric tone that characterizes the end of the saga and the whole of the second romance edition. Although one might believe that the end of the saga was influenced by the second version of the romance, it has been shown that the end of the latter is missing and such a speculation is therefore unfounded. For space reasons, it will not be possible to include the second version in the present study, but a brief résumé of it will be given at the end of the chapter with the analysis. Leclanche's theory regarding the chivalric end of the saga is that it came from England to Norway and was translated first into Old Norse and then into Icelandic. The common text that the comparison (manuscript V, saga and Middle-English *Floris*) allows to restore, the so-called insular vulgata, seems to constitute the ancient version of the romance (Leclanche 1980: 194). The latter part of Leclanche's study focuses mainly on the description of the manuscripts and on the elaboration of the stemma, on the classification of the foreign versions and on the relationship between the insular and the continental traditions, but less on the concept of *courtoisie*. He does not consider the concept inappropriate for the story of Floire and Blancheflor, in spite of his classification of the romance as pré-*courtois* (pre-courtly). According to Leclanche, the story cannot be a part of the Arthurian orbit, but the *courtois* influence is perceptible in the prologue of the "chamber of the ladies", in the description of the garden of King Félis where also the notion of *joie d'amour* appears (id.). It results from Leclanche's classification of versions into insular and continental that it is the continental tradition which preserved the *courtois* aspect. My aim is to prove that the concept of *courtoisie* is not totally lost in the translation of the romance into the Old Norse saga, which is a member of the insular vulgata.

The other comparative study between the romance and the saga belongs to Géraldine Barnes and is part of a larger study which includes two other riddarasögur, namely *Ívens saga* and *Parcevals saga*. The weakness of Barnes' study is that she refers mostly to manuscripts A, B and C, which, it has been shown, the translation is based on. Besides, Barnes does not make any comments with regard to the two traditions Leclanche talks about. That must be because Leclanche's systematic study of the two French romances and of the versions deriving from them came some years after that of Barnes'. With regard to the concept of *courtoisie*, Barnes claims that *amour courtois* plays no part in the story and that the *roman d'aventure* or *roman idyllique* is free of the psychological complexities of the *romans courtois* (Barnes 1974: 176). In my study I wish to prove that there are *courtois* traces in the romance and in the saga, and as for *amour courtois*, and especially *fin'amor*, I will analyse that thoroughly later in the thesis. The interesting aspect with this romance is that as Barnes says "the writer is not interested in those details of armed conflict which

characterize the roman cortois". The saga, on the other hand, has a more chivalric tone. This will be dealt with in the analysis chapter. Barnes does not analyse the concept of *courtoisie* in particular. Her study is structured on a parrallel analysis between characters, such as Flore in the romance and Flóres in the saga, the emir and the trial, Blancheflor, Blankiflúr and amors. It is this particular part of Barnes study which deals with the theme of love, but Barnes' focus is not on the aspect of *courtly love*, as specified in the beginning. Another part in Barnes' study deals with conversion and retreat. I have structured my analysis around the concept of *courtoisie*, which, as I have shown, implies *courtly love*, prowess, generosity.

Another study in which I have found the proper instruments for the comparison between the romance and the saga on the theme of *courtly love* belongs to Daniel Sävborg (2005). Sävborg sustains in an unpublished study on the question of the Norse world's reception of *courtly love*, *Norden och den höviska kärleken,* that there could not exist two more different genres than *islendingasögur* and the *continental courtly romances*. This is obvious in the contrast between concise formulations, asperity and objective attitude (direct speech) in the saga, and lyrical language adornments, sentimentality and inner analysis in the romance. However, these two genres flourish at the same time. Sävborg's question is to which degree these genres influence each other, especially on the theme that characterizes courtly literature, namely love. As it is generally accepted, *courtly love* reaches the Norse world during the 1200's through the translations of continental romances into the so-called *riddarasögur*. Sävborg underlines the fact that many researchers have almost unanimously asserted that the *riddarasögur* leave out what is typically courtly. In their words, the *riddarasögur* show "a lack of interest in the ritual and emotion of love", and abbreviate or omit the "analyses of mental states" (Geraldine Barnes 1993: 532). Eyvind Fjeld Halvorsen (1992) and Bernd Kretschmer (1982) express similar points of view, both referred to by Sävborg. Moreover, Phillip M. Mitchell (1959: 465) was of the opinion that "the translators displayed a tendency to omit the detailed descriptions and the subtleties of emotion in order to get forward with the plot" and that the emphasis on the narrative content "reveals a failure to appreciate some of the essential qualities of the literature" introduced in Norway.

Marianne Kalinke has put forward the theory that the original translations must have been closer to their source, and that the changes mentioned above are only the result of later copies of the works. In support of her claim she adds that some of the typical courtly features, like repetition and variation of synonyms, are present in the Norse translations (1981: 47-74, 138-144).

A somewhat contradictory claim has been put forward by researchers who have tried to prove that influence from continental literature, especially the courtly ideals, can also be

traced in native literature. Sävborg's article deals with exactly this contradiction. He tries to solve it by asking the following questions: 1) how do the riddarasögur mirror the love descriptions they meet in the romances, 2) have the *islendingasögur* or the saga style influenced the way love is presented in the *riddarasögur*? 3) are there any courtly influences upon the way love is presented in the native Norse literature? In this attempt, Sävborg draws clear distinctions and criteria for each tradition.

Love is a motif that generally plays a minor role in the hero's or the saga-characters' life in *islendingasögur*. It is subordinated motifs like violence and conflict. There are no explicit adjectives to describe the feelings of love or erotic attraction in the native sagas, but there are motifs and clichés which mark these feelings: conversation between a man and a woman, a man and a woman sit together, a man pays a visit to a woman, a saga-character offers his beloved a gift consisting of a piece of clothing (Sävborg 2005).

Sävborg (2005) classified the stylistic tendencies in expressing *courtly love* in both the *islendingasögur* and the romances as follows:

There are five tendencies with regard to the love and feelings presented in the *islendingasögur* in comparison to the romances:

- outer attitude (reaction) vs. inner analysis (there is little focus on the characters' psychology and inner feelings). The attitude is presented by means of motifs and clichés in the *islendingasögur*, like for instance isolation from the beloved one, as we are going to see in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*.

- the "not carefully polished" tendency. It is not common to find metaphors, comparisons, poetic constructions about love and feelings. Adjectives and adverbs emphasizing words like love or kiss are very rare.

- the weakening tendency which consists in expressing strong love feelings by weak formulations and not by direct speech on love. Even the strongest love passion is presented as a quiet conversation between the couple. Litotes are very common in expressing strong suffering.

- the indirect tendency by which no saga-character ever confesses love directly to his lover. Often there are other saga-characters who reveal these feelings or make indirect references.

- the shortening tendency. In the *islendingasögur* love is presented in brief, without elaborate descriptions or with adjectives of intensity.

A prevailing intrigue in the *islendingasögur* is that a young unmarried woman's relatives (father or brother) try to put an end to the relationship. This is more common than love outside marriage. The same aspect appears in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*.

The stylistic features and speech techniques for the *courtly love* that characterizes the romances are:

- love often dominates the literary work as a whole, but also the main character's life. The intrigue is guided by love. It is a decisive phenomenon for the entire life of both lovers. Motifs like battle and outstanding deeds are secondary.

- love is often outside marriage.

- certain motifs are typical: love is revealed through lovesickness, love at first sight, farewell scenes loaded with feelings, *Frauendienst* (the man allows himself to be humiliated so as to be worthy of the lady's love).

- in terms of style and technique, the tendencies are: love is presented in an elaborate language with comparisons and metaphors, often with many adjectives and embroideries; inner analyses of the characters' strong and complex feelings prevail; the lovers express their love openly in monologues and dialogues. Elaboration is a continuous tendency: both the descriptions and the monologues are characterized by variation. There are also extreme effects to increase this tendency: lovesickness expressed through faintness, fever and shaking; grief for the death of the beloved one expressed through faintness, suicide and self-abuse.

Taken in parallell, *islendingasögur* and the *roman courtois* have fundamentally different tendencies on almost all these points when it comes to the matter of style, technique, continuous motifs and isolated features. Then, what happens when continental romances are transformed into *riddarasögur*?

As Kalinke suggested, many of the changes in comparison to the continental romances must be the work of later scribes. It is reasonable to believe that the translations in the manuscripts from around the time the translation presumably took place, around 1220's, must be closer to the continental story. Changes do appear in later *riddarasögur*: *Tristams saga*, *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, *Percevals saga*, *Ívens saga* and others. These could be either the work of later scribes or of early translations from the 1200's. We must however ask: how much of the typical continental courtly portrayal is kept in the *riddarasögur*? The general and false criticism of the sagas sounds like this: a continuous tendency to omit or reduce the author's thoughts and reflections on love, total omission of the allegorical digressions on love and the god of love, the reduction of long monologues and elaborate psychological analyses (Sävborg 2005). This is not the case in all sagas and cannot be used as an overall claim. By following Sävborg's theory I will do a concrete analysis of the courtly portrayals in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*.

As for the question of how the saga tradition influenced the portrayal of love in the *riddarasögur* it is important to emphasize the need for clear criteria and distinctions in order to be able to discuss the courtly and the saga tradition in a meaningful way. To be able to judge whether or not the saga tradition has had an influence on the *riddarasögur*, we have to find these, or some of these features in the *riddarasögur*. Sävborg has noticed the absence from the *riddarasögur* of sagaclichés, motifs and formulae. There are fewer portrayals of explicit feelings than in the continental courtly romances. The idea is that the *riddarasögur* of the 1200's have not entirely been influenced by the feeling and love portrayals present in the *islendingasögur*. Sävborg has proved that the continental *courtly love* still remained the main theme of the *riddarasögur*. Even in the sagas where omissions and reductions are obvious, the fundamental features of the courtly ideal are still kept. There seem to have been no attempts at adapting the *riddarasögur* to the love portrayals of the native saga tradition. As a result of the concrete analysis between the romance and the saga I have shown that love is presented through the five tendencies: indirectly, unadorn, shortened, diminuated, the outer attitude but also, although in a lesser degree, through lovesickness, some metaphors, open love confessions, intensified feeling descriptions, reference to thoughts and feelings, monologues, psychological analysis, comparisons with elements from nature.

3.2.2. Comparative approach

The method I am using in this thesis is a comparative structural and semantic analysis and evaluation of the translation into Old Norse. I will look at how the two authors deploy different rhetorical devices for various purposes, and how this reflects the respective cultures, French and Norse. The main focus is the concept of *courtoisie,* namely how it is expressed in the romance and the saga, what is lost and what is gained in the translation process? Likewise, I will look at what the purpose of the loss and gain might have been. One important aspect of *courtoisie* is *courtly love*, and much of the analysis will be based on it. We cannot impose our reality and perception of love onto what happened in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but rather try to understand and evaluate the stories in their context. The Church and its role as an institution with enormous control and power in the Middle Ages is an important factor I will consider especially with regard to the story of Floire and Blancheflor and the kind of love it promotes. Flóres and Blankiflúr is clearly the work of an ecclesiastic translator. In chapter 6 I will prove this claim by excerpts from the text of the romance and the saga.

These sagas represent images of the twelfth and thirteenth century France and Norway. The romances were largely popular in France. With the introduction of a new

literary genre, the sagas of chivalry, the popularity of stories such as Floire and Blancheflor grew among the Norse public, as well. To find out why the saga gained popularity I will also attempt a hermeneutical approach, namely how we, the readers, come to the broadest understanding of the creator of text and his relation to his local audiences, both local and over time, within the constraints of culture and history.

The analysis of the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and *Flóres saga et Blankiflúr* will also be carried out in the light of the definitions of *courtoisie* and *fin'amor*. I will apply these definitions to concrete examples from the romance and the saga. The question will be: Are *Floire* and *Flóres* examples of *fin'amor*?

CHAPTER 4. Historical, social and cultural context of the thesis

4.1. The historical, social and cultural context in twelfth century France

The twelfth century in France was the time of the first three crusades of western European kingdoms against Islam. The crusades led to a doctrine of a just war within Christianity, at first for the defence of faith, but later for forced conversion.

There are certain historical events that allow for the dating of the *Conte* to 1150. First of all, how could a cleric from Touraine, in the middle of the twelfth century, learn about an Oriental tale? Probably through a traveller or a pilgrim who returned from the Holy Land or from Santiago de Compostella. The author could also have made the journey himself. It is likely that the author composed the *Conte* in the cultural environment around Eleanor of Aquitaine, while she was still queen of France, or in a seigneurial court close to the royal couple. The beginning and the end of the story allude to the death of Guillaume X, duke of Aquitain and Eleanor's father, on the road to Compostella, but also to her marriage to the young Louis VII in 1137 (he was sixteen and Eleanor was fifteen) and to the death of king Louis VI. The news of his death arrived during the wedding celebration, as in the story of *Floire et Blancheflor*, and it led to Louis VII's accession to the throne the same year (Leclanche 2003: XVII). Eleanor's participation alongside King Louis VII in the Second Crusade (1145-1149) led to a conflict between them and to the annulment of their marriage in 1152. This fact allowed researchers to date the romance to a date before 1152, that is to approximately 1150.

Behind the theme of the couple's quest for happiness arises a clerical ideology of a peaceful Crusade, of the conversion of pagan Saracens by other means than by sword, ideology which was in harmony with the personality of the pious King Louis VII. It is known that the abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable, wished the conversion of Islam by the

force of theological argumentation. There are researchers who believe that Louis VII could not have shown any interest in such literature as *Floire et Blancheflor*, but one must not exclude the role of Eleanor, a high-spirited lady of almost thirty, who surely did not wait to become queen of England to be a woman of letters. This ideology and the historical events around the marriage of Louis VII and Eleanor could have created the right climate for the creation of the clerical tale of *Floire et Blancheflor*, which besides the controversial idyll between the two children is also the initiation journey of a young prince meant to become a Christian (Leclanche 2003: XVIII).

In the 1930s, the French historian Marc Bloch gave the concept of feudal society a broader meaning. According to him, the medieval social order of western and central Europe was characterized by the absence of a strong central authority and by the diffusion of governmental power through the granting of administrative and legal authority over particular lands. Higher lords and the king granted these lands, called fiefs, to vassals sworn by voluntary oath to support or serve them. Another feature of the feudal society is the obligation attached to particular holdings of land that the peasant household should supply the lord with specified labour services, a part of its output or money. In his book *La société féodale, les classes et le gouvernement des hommes* (1939-1940), Bloch notes that ”the second feudal age” in France, more exactly what he considers to have its onset in the eleventh century, was an age characterized by a vast network of mutual relationships created around the fief. This relationship network was determined by the desire of the nobility to affirm its pre-eminence towards a double pressure: the tendency of the monarchy towards the centralization of power and the endless desire of the emerging nobility to show off their money. The result was a new context which allowed for the appearance of *courtoisie* (Bloch 1940: 35-36). By the twelfth century, the nobility organized tournaments in which knights engaged each other in battle in order to prove their skill, courage and honour. The winners gained prestige and honour in the eyes of fellow nobles and peasants alike. A code of knightly behaviour, also known as chivalry, evolved from these feudal contests of skill. A worthy knight was supposed to show his bravery, loyalty, respect and courage. Over time, the church began to use the fighting spirit of the feudal knight for Christian purposes, thus adding a religious element to the chivalric culture. Within the Christian framework, the knight was supposed to show his loyalty and courage in the service of God. In other words, the knight was expected to protect the weak and defend the church against heretics.

Another view on the context regarding the appearance of *courtoisie* is presented by the sociologist Norbert Elias in his book: *The Civilizing Process* (1994). Elias describes the social landscape of the early Middle Ages as a multitude of greater and smaller castles; even

the town settlements of earlier times have been feudalized. The centres of these towns are formed by the castles and estates of lords from the warrior class. Elias' attempt was to find the sets of social relationships that led towards the development of the feudal system. His conclusion was that socially acceptable behaviour appeared in the French language and was designated by the word *courtoisie*. The *courtois* standards of conduct were the starting point of changes of 'psychical makeup', and these changes in the structure of behaviour and psychical makeup are connected to the changes in the structure of society (Elias 1994: XV).

The twelfth century is also the beginning of *troubadour* and *trouvère* music in France.[10] The most famous themes the troubadours dealt with were *chivalry* and *courtly love*.[11] Elias noticed that "within the warrior class itself, a kind of upper stratum forms more and more distinctly; their dwelling places were the real centres of minnesong and the poetry of the troubadours, on the one hand, and of *courtois* forms of behavior on the other."[12] (op.cit. 1994: XIV). I will make further reference to Elias' theory on the civilizing process and the role *courtoisie* played in that process in the chapter: *What it courtoisie?*

The concept of *courtoisie* is much more complex and needs to be discussed not only in the light of state development, but also of church influence. In his book, *The origins of courtliness* (1985), the historian C. Stephen Jaeger underlines the fact that courtliness and courtly humanity were, next to Christian ideals, the most powerful civilizing forces in the West since ancient Rome (Jaeger 1985: 261). Referring to the formation of courtly ideals, Jaeger asserts that the worldly clergy, the high aristocracy in state service and the members of the imperial church were largely the bearers and the transmitters of these ideals (op.cit. 1985: 262). The conservative clergy, on the other hand, resisted courtliness vehemently. Jaeger explains that the conservative clergy saw only the negative aspects of courtliness: splendid clothing, materialism and sensuality, love of wealth, pursuit of vainglory and foolish worldly wisdom. They also saw courtliness as a bad influence on the lay nobility, numbing its warrior spirit, holding it enchained in sloth, luxury and lustfulness. Courtliness was regarded as a real political danger, a threat to the divine order, since it is the god-given task of the warrior to fight (id.). Further, Jaeger suggests that the figure of the chivalric

[10] The terms *troubadour* and *trouvère* will be thouroughly explained in a later chapter.
[11] The concepts will be defined later in the thesis.
[12] Minnesong or minnesang was the tradition of poetry and song writing in Germany which flourished in the twelfth century and continued into the fourteenth century. People who wrote and performed minnesang are known as minnesingers. Minnesang had much in common with the troubadour tradition of France, and it likely stemmed from that tradition, though it developed unique features. Like the troubadors, the minnesingers mainly sang of *courtly love* (this is where the *Minne* part of their name comes from).

knight of romance was certainly influenced by conservative Christian thought, and especially by the crusading ideal and the notion of the *miles cristianus*.[13]

The question regarding what influenced courtliness is a complex one, but alongside the crusading ideal, that of the courtly gentlemen and of the educated knight played an important role. Jaeger underlines that the inspiration that remains for us most visible was the courtly romance and the character it had invented, the chivalric knight (Jaeger 1985: 265). The worldly clergy had the obligation to instruct the lay nobility. The common instrument of instruction at court was the history, *Gesta antiquorum principum, Historia regum* (ibid.: 266).

Jaeger states that the main reason of the clerical authors for writing the romances were fame and wealth, but they were also exercising the clerical duty of correction and instruction in courtesy. By spending winter nights hearing the tales of Arthur and Guinevere or of Tristan and Isolde, the knights were given moral instruction. There have been attacks on the credibility of the romances, but the argument against the lies romances contain is counterbalanced by the lessons in courtesy and truth they give (id.).

The poet-cleric, as Jaeger calls the author of the romances, created the figure of the chivalric knight by combining ideals in the milieu of the court clergy with those of the warrior class (id.) By doing that, the authors of romance ”were not only creating an educational model for knights and laymen to imitate, but were indulging in their own wish-dreams of a form of life that combines the freedom, heroism and amorous license of the knight with the civilized ideals of the courtly cleric.” (Jaeger 1985: 267).

In discussing the origins of courtesy, Jaeger underlines that there are some assumptions that are firmly rooted in the social, political and intellectual history of France and Germany from the high Middle Ages to the present (Jaeger 1985: 269). The first of these is the notion that the history of courtesy is inseparable from the history of vernacular courtly literature, and there are no literary sources prior to French courtly literature that might have indicated the presence of sophisticated court etiquette. According to Jaeger, there are many nationalistic prejudices surrounding the subject of medieval courtesy as a social and historical reality, but the dependence of Germany on France is an incontestable fact of literary history (op.cit. 1985: 270).

[13] *Miles christianus* is an archetype created by the Christian writers of the sixteenth century. The literal translation would be ’soldier of Christ’, term which embodies all the virtues held highest by the church, including obedience to God and the church. A chivalric knight was supposed to possess such virtues, and *miles christianus* can thus denote a ’Christian knight’.

4.2. The historical, social and cultural context in Norway and Iceland under the reign of Haakon Haakonsson (1217-1263)

The first step towards understanding how a concept undergoes transformations is to get familiar with the cultural, social and political situation of the period in which the transformation occurs. Then, one needs to investigate how the literary work, that is the saga, relates to the political and religious ideology of the period and to the conventions of the genre. Identifying the social environment of the saga is a step forward in mapping its degree of reception.

The saga genre flourished during the last half of the 1200's and during the 1300-, and 1400's. One of the factors that contributed to this expansion was, to a great extent, the new political agenda in Norway and Iceland. According to Jónas Kristjánsson, the sagas were "accounts of people and events from different places and different times, ranging from the contemporary world to the remotest past, from the author's own valley to far-off foreign lands." (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 22). Notwithstanding the fact that historians have long neglected them from their agenda, Knut Helle (1962: 7) and Paul Schach (1993: 260) regard *Hákonar saga* the saga about king Haakon Haakonsson, by Sturla Thórðarson, as one of the best sources that can tell us about Norwegian medieval history.

The first sagas were characterized by dry information of the kind the earliest historians provided, or incredible and didactic elements typical of hagiography. These trends gradually changed, and "influence from the romantic chivalric literature of western Europe began to make itself felt from about the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, largely through the medium of translation – the first *riddarasögur* (sagas of chivalry) – which both in Norway and Iceland appear to have been warmly welcomed as having all the spice of novelty (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 22). *Riddarasögur,* together with the sagas of Icelanders, *íslendinga sögur*, and the sagas of ancient times, *fornaldarsögur* made up the three types of sagas with settings in the past. With the introduction of the sagas of chivalry, the authors began to make up their own sagas, by putting material from old and contemporary works into a new context. According to Jónas Kristjánsson, these fictions became especially popular. Themes like *courtoisie* were supposedly completely unknown to the saga readers before the translation of the *riddarasögur*. Starting from this assumption, I will study how the concept was perceived in medieval Norway.

When Haakon Haakonsson was elected king, the golden age in medieval Norwegian history (1217-1319) started. Haakon Haakonsson established lasting peace in Norway as well as Iceland, introduced new laws to govern the succession to the throne, built churches

and monasteries, and he actively promoted the townships and organized and strengthened the country's defences (op.cit. 1997: 314-315).

The reign of Haakon Haakonsson is particularly interesting from a cultural point of view. The king's main cultural contribution was probably the commission of a series of translations from French romances into sagas of chivalry. Haakon Haakonsson had connections with many European courts, and especially with England. This leads Fidjestøl to believe that the king commissioned these translations from French-speaking England (Fidjestøl 1997: 353). It is not certain how many translations Haakon Haakonsson instigated, but in the introduction to five of them it is mentioned that they were translated under royal commission. In analyzing the reasons why both Haakon Haakonsson and king Alfonso of Spain commissioned the translation of European literature, the historian Vincent Almazan (1988), believes that the similar historical contexts of translation in the two courts can throw light upon these reasons (Almazan 1988: 216). Haakon Haakonsson aimed at raising Norwegian literature and culture to an international level. In order to make Norwegian literature part of the European stream, it is natural to begin by translating foreign works into the local language, Old Norse, and then create new compositions in the same genre.

Fidjestøl associates these translations with king Haakon's intention to carry out a cultural and educational programme. The building of Haakon's Hall in Bergen and the composition of *The King's Mirror* (*Konungs Skuggsjá*) are part of this programme (Fidjestøl 1997: 362).

Geraldine Barnes underlines the moral aspect of Haakon Haakonsson's cultural innovations and claims that the chivalric sagas were meant "to instruct the nobility in the more practical ideals and duties of chivalry" (Barnes 1975: 153). By chivalric sagas she means "textbooks of chivalric conduct and of Christian morality" (Barnes 1975: 157).

One aspect of interest in my study is the fact that King Haakon wanted to model his realm on the leading nations of Europe. He therefore maintained lasting connections with Emperor Frederick II, the great promoter of arts, whose realms stretched from the Baltic to Sicily, as well as with France and Spain. These connections resulted, among others, in his daughter, Kristín, marrying Don Philip, brother of the king of Spain. Haakon Haakonsson believed that his royal power was given from the Almighty and persuaded Pope Innocent IV to send Cardinal William of Sabina to preside at his coronation in Bergen in 1247 (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 315). In short, the introduction of the sagas of chivalry corresponded to a period in European history called the age of chivalry. This introduction must be seen in relation to the king's political intentions to legitimize the state, but also to the moral

influence they might have had on the Norwegian court members. How broad the newly created reading public was, and whether it was limited to the court, or just to the circles of highborn ladies at the court, will be investigated in a later chapter.

According to Fidjestøl, King Haakon commissioned these translations from French-speaking England. In this respect, it is important to clarify what connections there were between Haakon Haakonsson's court and the English royal house of Anjou-Plantagenet, to which Henry III belonged. Haakon and Henry were good friends and exchanged letters and gifts. As a result of his connections with the European courts, Haakon Haakonsson introduced the ideals of knighthood in Norway. New courtly customs and feudal titles were introduced, and his followers were no longer "landed men" and "servitors" but barons and knights, who were addressed as *herra*, "lord" (id.).

The fact that Haakon Haakonsson wanted his realm to resemble European courts was also interpreted as an intention to find an ideal in foreign kings. A glorified character in the sagas of chivalry is King Arthur. The philologist Hermann Reichert suggests that, by allowing King Arthur's name and deeds to be present in the romantic sagas, Haakon Haakonsson might have wanted to identify himself with the chivalric figure of Arthur, or might have simply considered it necessary. In his *Historia Regum Britanniae* (about 1136), which partly deals with the legends of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, Geoffrey of Monmouth allows us imply that King Arthur was not only used as a literary motif or a symbol of courtly life but mostly as an important factor in giving legitimacy to a king's rule (Reichert 1986: 403).[14] As we will see in the chapters below, the sagas underwent adaptations in their translation from Old French into Old Norse. According to Reichert, St. Olav was a better model for Haakon:

"En með Því at konungr var í ættartolu við inn helga Óláf konung, Þá vildi hann helzt á hans hátiðardegi Þá sæmð taka. Síðan var til allra hluta ráðit, sem til Þurfti."

"However, since the king (Haakon) was in a genealogy with St. Óláfr the king, he (Haakon) preferred to receive the honour on his (Olavs) feast-day. Then everything was properly arranged, as needed." (Reichert 1986: 405) [15]

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[14] The Bretons carried the legends of King Arthur as they were the escaping nobility from the Saxons. Geoffrey of Monmouth was also of Breton stock. Hermann Reichert asserts that in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* (in English *The History of the Kings of Britain*), Geoffrey of Monmouth had Arthur descended from mainland Bretons who had been summoned by the British to help them resist the Anglo-Saxons, giving thus legitimacy to their rule. Reichert develops this idea in the article *Les origines du motif de la Table Ronde dans le Brut de Wace* (1981). According to him, Wace wrote *Brut* in 1155 for the wedding of Henry II. The romance is an adaptation of Geoffrey's *Historia*, and Wace was the first one to append the Round Table to Geoffrey's narrative. Since the romance was one of praise for a ruling monarch, Reichert interpreted it as an important factor in political legitimation. We do not know which edition of Geoffrey's *Historia* Reichert referred to. (les Geoffrey of Monmouth)

[15] It is about King Haakon's annointment in 1247. The translation belongs to Judith Jesch, translator of Reichert's text, but I added 'Haakon' and 'Olavs' for a better understanding of the quotation. The

By that we can infer that Haakon Haakonsson did not see in Arthur an ideal king. Reichert also suggested that claiming one's genealogy from King Arthur could easily be seen as an attempt to claim the English throne. I believe that allowing Arthur's name to be present in the sagas of chivalry can only be interpreted as a sign of admiration and not as a claim to the throne.

By the educational programme mentioned above, king Haakon must have intended to show his literary formation, as well. Haakon Haakonsson was a pupil of the school of Nidaros, and he enjoyed learning and literature all his life. Matthew Paris, a monk from the great English monastery St. Albans, described him as *bene literatus* when he visited Norway in 1248. On his deathbed, the king was read both Latin books and Old Norse sagas (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 314).

4.3. The historical, social and cultural context in Norway under Haakon V Magnusson (1299-1319)

Professor of French language, Helge Nordahl, wrote in the introduction to a translation of *Flores og Blancheflor* (1985) that two Norwegian kings, Haakon Haakonsson and Haakon V Magnusson, had a cultural policy clearly directed to France. According to Nordahl, both kings systematically commissioned translations of French originals (Nordahl 1985: 11). Encyclopædia Britannica writes that Haakon V Magnusson shifted the centre of government eastward from the North Sea ports and led an anti-English foreign policy which paved the way for the commercial domination of Norway by north German traders of the Hanseatic League. By his preferential treatment of the Hanseatic traders, Haakon V aroused the resentment of English traders.

Haakon V Magnusson carried on with the legacy left by his grandfather, Haakon Haakonsson, and continued to commission translations. He was supposedly interested in both art and literature (Nordahl 1985: 12). Yet, he was mostly interested in hagiographical works and commissioned the translation of *Thomas saga*, *Mariæ jærtegn* and a collection of legends by the name *Hellige menns blomst* (*Heilagra manna blómstr*). The historian Gustav Storm (1877) and the philologist Else Mundal (1995) assert that, after his death in 1319, Haakon V Magnussons was worshiped as a saint in the local community around Mary's Church in Oslo. Storm assumed that Haakon V Magnusson was remembered mostly for his generosity towards Mary's Church and the clergy (Storm 1877: 467-470), while Mundal

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inconsistency Oláf/Oláfr/Olav is due to different kinds of spelling in the source, in the author's translation and mine.

writes that Haakon V's cult developed mainly because of the will in which he asked for his death-day to be celebrated by giving food to the poor (Mundal 1995: 116-117).

Furthermore, it is recorded in contemporary laws that the king did not give his noblemen and attendants the same attention that his grandfather had done by addressing them as *herra*, "lord", or by giving them rights and power. Haakon V was determined to reduce the power of the higher nobles and clerics. In this respect, he abolished the title of baron in 1308, removed members of the aristocracy from the royal council, and regained the right to appoint selected priests. The king's decision to abolish the nobility is recorded in laws about king's men and attendants from the 17th of June 1308:

"Jarle-og lendmannsnavn avskaffer vi åpenlyst, uten alene for kongesønner og jarlen av Orkenøyene." (Bagge and Helle 1973 no. 53)

"We abolish names of earls and barons, with the exception of king's sons and the Earl of the Orkneys (my translation)"[16]

In the same set of laws, the king criticizes the fashion of the time, which he finds too sumptuous:

"...vi forbyr at noen heretter skal ha annen klesdrakt enn vi selv har og lar sveinene våre bære i vår egen gård..." (Bagge and Helle 1973 no. 53)

"...from now on, we forbid anyone to wear different clothes than we use and allow our young men to use in our own courtyard..." (my translation)

From the quotations above, we can easily infer the king's lack of vanity, but also his support of the peasants. It seems natural then, in a time characterized by luxury, that not king Haakon V, but someone else commissioned the translation of chivalric sagas. The most famous collection of translated sagas during his reign is the Swedish *Eufemiavisorna* which appeared at the initiative of Queen Eufemia, wife of Haakon V Magnusson. A suggestion that contradicts the one about the king's simple life belongs to Helge Nordahl who writes that Haakon V Magnusson's magnificent wedding was remembered for many years because of the "dunklær, kostbar silke og baldakin" (down garments, expensive silk and taffeta -my translation). The idea that the king enjoyed both magnificence and chivalric literature is corrected by the same author who explains that *Viktor saga* from the end of the 1300's must have mistaken the king for his queen when it wrote that Haakon Magnusson, king of Norway, translated many riddarasögur into Old Norse (Nordahl 1985: 13). In other words, the king and the queen did not share the same literary interests. While Haakon V

[16] An earl or jarl was an Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian title, meaning chieftain, and it referred especially to chieftains set to rule a territory instead of a king. In Scandinavia, it became obsolete in 1231, during the reign of Haakon Haakonsson.

Magnusson had a solid interest in religious literature, Queen Eufemia seems to have been the instigator of further translations of French and German literature, this time into Swedish knittelvers[17].

It is considered that King Haakon and Queen Eufemia, forced to look for a bridegroom for their one year-old daughter, and in order to prevent confusion about the succession, chose, in 1301, Duke Erik of Södermanland, the brother of the Swedish king, Birger. In *Erikskrönikan* it is recorded that, at the wedding of his brother in 1298, the brilliant young knight, Duke Erik, outshone like an angel all the other knights with his courtly conduct. (Reichert 1986: 398).[18] Eufemia seems to have been so pleased with her son-in-law's interest in knighthood that she had three courtly romances translated for him. The first one, *Ivan Lejonriddaren,* was translated from Old French, but the translator seems to have known an earlier Norwegian version, which suggests that the translation was done at the court in Oslo. The Norwegian royal court had a library of romances, which was unique in the whole North, according to the expert in Norse literature, Ludvig Holm-Olsen (Nordahl 1985: 14). It is generally accepted that the second saga, *Flores och Blanzeflor,* was directly translated from the Norwegian *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*. The third romance, *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*, was translated from German, but in its epilogue it is also mentioned that the German source was translated *aff walsko* (from French), by Emperor Otto IV (Reichert 1986: 399).

We can assume from the above that knighting ceremonies with splendour and distinguished foreign guests, where the European chivalry seemingly picked up the latest fashions, were few in Norway in the time of King Haakon V Magnusson. In this respect, an important question arises: Was it enough for the Norwegian public to be read or told about such chivalric practices in order to follow them, or is imitation possible only by attending such ceremonies? By answering this question, we will understand whether courtly practices ended with the reign of Haakon V Magnusson or took other forms after Norway's golden age. In 1349, the Black Death spread to Norway, and this is an important factor to consider when we refer to human and material loss. When, if ever, could a revival of the concept of *courtoisie* have taken place?

Another initiative taken by king Haakon V Magnusson and Queen Eufemia is the building of Akershus castle, which, just like Haakon's hall in Bergen, gained the status of a

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[17] Knittelvers is an old Germanic verse form which was used in historical narratives or rhymed chronicals. The characteristic feature of knittelvers is that every line has four stressed syllables. In other words, the verse feet can vary in the same line. There is no rhythmical pattern or clear stanza division. The rhyme pattern is usually of the type aabbcc.

[18] Hermann Reichert refers to *Erikskrönikan,* ed. Rolf Pipping, 1963 (reprinted from *Samlingar utgivna av Svenska Fornskrift-sällskapet*, Part 231, vol 68).

strong fortress. It is not known whether *Eufemiavisorna* were written at Akershus, but we can assume that they were read and listened to there early during the 1300's.

Hermann Reichert has a hypothesis on why courtly motifs like King Arthur and the *Round Table* are sometimes mentioned in the prologue, although they have no function in the story. According to Reichert, Scandinavia was not as heavily influenced by the courtly culture as other European countries, and the fame of these motifs reached Scandinavia in a lesser degree than on the rest of the continent (Reichert 1986: 394). The *Round Table* was almost unknown in Scandinavia, but it appears as *tavlrunde skara* or *kringlottu bordh* in the Old Swedish romance *Hertig Fredrik av Normandie*. Reichert's sociological explanation for why the introduction of King Arthur's *Round Table* was met with such resistance in Scandinavia, is that Arthur's court acquired a reputation for frivolity and was no longer considered exemplary. In *Möttuls saga*, one the works in which Haakon Haakonsson is mentioned as instigator, the women of Arthur's court, including Queen Guinevere, are accused of infidelity (Reichert 1986: 395). At the time the translations appeared, all adultry was made a 'capital offence' in the laws. This aspect is relevant in my discussion about adaptation.

CHAPTER 5. Concepts, definitions and examination of concepts

5.1. What is *courtoisie*?

As I discussed in the chapter on the context in which *courtoisie* appeared, twelfth century France, there are no literary sources prior to the French courtly literature that might have indicated the presence of a sophisticated court etiquette. No further arguments are needed in this direction, but I need to define and examine the concept in order to create a frame in which I want to include the analysis. To begin with, there is one important distinction I need to make between the formal and the semantic side of the word *courtoisie*. I resort to etymology as a first step in this investigation, and I will then move on to the semantic changes the word *courtoisie* undergoes and especially to the psychological aspect of these changes.

The etymology of *courtois* and *courtoisie* sheds light on the formation and the meaning of the concept. Our common assumption is that *courtoisie* comes from the word 'court'. But how do we prove that? Since Latin was the predominant written language of the medieval west, several names were given to the court of the king, as for instance *aula* and *palatium*. However, the Italian literary scholar Aurelio Roncaglia considers that the binominal *cors/curtis* took precedence over all other names given to the court (Roncaglia

1982: 33-36). *Curia* and *cohors* in classical Latin became *cors/curtis in* mediaeval Latin. Yet *curia* and *cohors* were not synonyms. *Cohors* initially meant the empty space of a residential complex, and later it became a military term meaning a group of soldiers such as the pretorian guard (*cohors praetoria*) who protected the emperor or the general. Figuratively, *cohors* also means retinue or suite.[19] The most frequent use of the word *curia* was to as a synonym for *senatus*, or the municipal government. In his *Histoire de la vie privée*, Georges Duby remarks that from the eighth century, *curia* tends to be confused with *curtis,* the fortification from which public power is legitimately driven back, while the scribes and the better-educated inversely used the word *curtis* when speaking of the royal palace (Duby 1985: 30). In our perception today, the words represent the opposition between the private and the public. The etymology shows us that the court of the kings in the Middle Ages was the household of the monarchs, a magnificent residence where they lived with their family, but also the place where several men met and exercised their power. But in order to mean the court 'of the kings', these words were almost always followed by the denominative *regius.* With the development of the vernacular, a whole family of related words appeared. *Courtois* and *courtoisie* are such related words, and Marc Bloch's definition of *courtoisie* strengthens the explanations given above:

"Le terme qui, depuis les environs de l'an 1100, sert couramment à désigner le faisceau de qualités nobles par excellence est caractéristique: *courtoisie* qui vient de cour…" (Bloch 1940: 35-36)

The term which, since approximately 1100, designates the noble qualities, is characteristic: *courtoisie* comes from court… (my translation)

The word *courtoisie* has evolved into a complex notion. The semantic evolution of the concept seems to have been rapid. Originally centred on the royal or seignorial court, *courtoisie* was soon enriched by several connotations. This definition of *courtoisie* is given by Jean Frappier in his study entitled *Amour courtois et Table Ronde* 1973. On the one hand, the name denoted an art of living, a fact of politeness, civilization, attentiveness towards the other, a science of manner and discourse, respect for women, bravery, liberty and most of all, care to refrain from what is evil or not noble. On the other hand, the concept of *courtoisie* also denoted an art of loving, representative of a certain elite: The noble, courteous man was he who knew how to love in a different manner than the common people. In short, courtly behaviour and *courtly love* are two main semantic aspects of *courtoisie* (Frappier 1973: 3). By this classification I do not wish to minimize the complexity of the concept, but rather to use it in such a way that is relevant for this study.

[19] I made the translation following the definitions given in a Latin-Romanian dictionary.

5.2. A history of the concept of *courtoisie* in France

The reason for dedicating a sub-chapter to the history of the concept is to show how it emerged, which connotations were contemporary with the appearance of the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor*, namely 1150 and which connotations followed around the time it was translated into Old Norse, that is the beginning of the thirteenth century. Another sub-chapter, which will deal particularly with concepts related to *courtoisie*, is somehow a continuation of the present one. I would like to begin with a general presentation of the origin of the concept and its evolution.

The vernacular literature that emerged in the twelfth century was a literature of chivalry. As showed above, the themes of this genre were, among others, love, honour and respect for the lady. The courtly literature appeared and flourished in the south of France, in the vernacular language called the language d'oc. The troubadour is the initiator of this genre. However, with the marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine to Louis VII and subsequently to Henry II Plantagenet (Count of Anjou, Duke of Normandy, and King of England after 1154), these southern literary influences were brought to the north of France, where the language d'oïl was used. *Oc* and *oïl* were the words for 'yes' in the two languages. The twelfth century in France was marked by ongoing historical and social developments, and this *second feudal age*, as Marc Bloch called it, was characterized by the influence of the court lady upon the formation of a new courtly ideal both in the south and in the north. It is probable that the court lady developed the concern for elegance and politeness and turned the authors' attention towards female characters and *courtly love*. This new type of courtly culture was best presented in the detailed, psychological descriptions and analyses of the characters' feelings. Moreover, Frappier states that it was in the 'romans *courtois*' of the north and not in the 'cansos' of the troubadours that such analyses were possible.[20] Therefore he concludes that love's noble value could only be expressed in the romances of the Oïl and not in the poetry of the Oc characterized by exaltation and subjectivity (Frappier 1973: 13).

The words *cortezia* and *cortes* in The language d'oc or Provençal and *corteisie* and *corteis* in the language d'oïl had only one general significance, namely the ideal of a dignified knight at the court: "idéal du chevalier élevé dans une cour". The poetry of the Oc, the romances of the Oïl and their translations into other European vernacular languages -Old English *curteis*, Middle Netherlandish *cortois*, Old German *kurteiss*, Middle High-German

[20] The newly-introduced terms: *romans courtois*, *cansos* and *troubadours* will be explained in the chapters that follow.

kurtois, Italian *cortese* and Spanish *cortés* - gave the concept of *courtoisie* new meanings. These new meanings will be discussed in the following chapter.

5.3. Concepts related to *courtoisie*, symbols and metaphors of love

5.3.1. *Amour courtois* (*courtly love*) and *fin'amor* (perfect love)

The following presentation of the concept of *courtoisie* and its related terms is mainly based on Jean Frappier (1973) and Moshé Lazar's (1964) studies on this topic.

Trade between Europe and the East contributed largely to the development of a taste for luxury and new spiritual values. This, in turn, favoured the development of a new social movement. New social classes emerged, and the feudal society became more hierarchical. As a result of this change, the aristocracy needed new social and moral ideals. This new tendency spread especially in the Southern courts. In contact with the Eastern civilization, the Southern aristocracy developed a taste for love and adventure, prowess and glory, risk and battle. This new universe characterized by moral independence and enjoyment of Earthly goods, opposes the Cluniac conceptions that had been dominant for over a century (Lazar 1964: 11). Although the Church preached the sacred character of marriage, it was incapable of imposing its authority on the aristocracy. The main criteria in choosing a wife were the fief and the political interests. Beauty and intelligence were not taken into account. Under such circumstances, the noblemen started to satisfy their sexual desires outside marriage. As a result of that, the wrongly married lady became the subject of the erotic literature composed and rendered at her service by the troubadours. In our perception, and according to Christian morality both then and now, the love ideal introduced by the troubadours was adulterous in nature. Yet, the troubadours did not regard adulterous love as a sin (Lazar 1964: 13). This conception led to the coexistence of two opposite truths: the one preached by the Church, and the one narrated by the troubadours.

Around 1150, the Southern love ideal reaches the courts of northern France. Besides the already strengthened monarchy and the powerful seigneurs, there existed a group of nomadic, disinherited nobles. They moved from court to court and enjoyed a worldly life, but their social condition was in decline. To compensate for that, the authors of the romances offer them an image of courtly heroes. The characters that represent them are thus taken from the social reality and transposed onto a magnificent level. What gained most interest at the Northern courts were the lais and the romances. According to Lazar, the lais, and especially the lais of Marie de France, were an adaptation of the courtly ideal to narrative literature (Lazar 1964: 14). The lais of Marie de France are twelve verse narratives in octosyllabic couplets dedicated to a 'noble' king (nobles reis), supposedly Henry II. The

romances reflected, more than the poetry, the aspirations of moral independence of the individual (Lazar 1964: 15).

Moshé Lazar argues that, when it spread from the South to the North, the ideology of *courtly love* suffered its first transformation. The poets of the North, also called trouvères, abandoned part of the erotic density and adulterous exaltation characteristic of the poetry of the troubadours, and wrote lais and romances where the main focus lay on the refined analysis of characters in love, on the adventurous life of the courtly knights and on the exaltation of a new social morality. These transformations occurred under the influence of the critical spirit of the trouvères, under their rationalistic tendency and under the influence of the Roman poet Ovid. This new class of writers was made up of the secular clerics. The number of such writers grew around 1150 mainly because of an increase in the number of schools (Lazar 1964: 15).

One thing to bear in mind is that the writers of the twelfth century had the aim to entertain their audience, as much as to educate them (Lazar 1964: 16). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that, as I will show below, the poets chose to express themselves in symbols and metaphors. Besides, the poetical vocabulary did not have the same value at all times. Lazar sustains that an expression originating in the Provençal poetry was not similarly employed a century later. The love ideology of the troubadours is different from the love ideology of the trouvères (Lazar 1964: 18). They share different views on love which we shall place under scrutiny in the sub-chapter *Troubadours and trouvères*. Yet, what is important to remember is that the poetry of the troubadours is characteristic of the twelfth century, whereas the poetry of the trouvères flourishes during the thirteenth and the fourteenth century.

Due to the slight variations in meaning of the concepts of *courtoisie* and *amour courtois*, I choose to call them phenomena to begin with. Gradually, and using the same theories launched by Frappier and Lazar, the nuances will appear. To put it correctly, when I mentioned that *courtoisie* appeared in the south of France, I meant the phenomenon of *courtoisie* with implications on the social, cultural and the psychological environment of the twelfth century. When we refer to the terminology, Frappier asserts that *courtoisie* appeared in the first half of the twelfth century in the aristocratic environment of the north, whereas *cortezia*, in Provençal or the *language d'oc*, on the other hand, appeared in the south, and contrary to the *courtoisie* of the North, it was not separate from the concept of *fin'amor* (perfect love) (Frappier 1973: 7). When referring to *courtoisie* and *amour courtois*, we cannot speak of the same kind of relationship. According to Frappier, *amour courtois* is a component of *courtoisie*. *Amour courtois* represents the extreme refinement of *courtoisie*,

but it is not the entire *courtoisie* (Frappier 1973: 3). The term *amour courtois* was not used as such during the Middle Ages. Frappier found only one example of this term in the poetry of the troubadours, namely *cortez'amor* used by Peire d'Alvernhe, who wrote between 1138-1180 (id.). The expression *amour courtois* were first used by Gaston Paris in his *Etudes sur les romans de la Table Ronde, Lancelot du Lac et Le Conte de la Charette* .[21] To conclude, *amour courtois* was not contemporary with either the songs of the troubadours or the romances of the Northern poets. The expressions used by the troubadours to express the art of love were *verai'amor* (true love), *bon'amor* (good love) and *fin'amor*. The term *courtly love,* that is the English translation of *amour courtois* was also popularized by the Irish writer C. S. Lewis scholarly study *The allegory of love, A Study in Medieval Tradition* (1971).

In the preface to another book edited by Moshé Lazar and Norris J. Lacy, *Poetics of Love in the Middle Ages, texts and contexts* (1989), the various modes of love illustrated in medieval literature, from the twelfth century on, have often been reduced to a single concept and term: *amour courtois* (*courtly love*). *Courtoisie* (courtliness), *fin'amor* (perfect love) and *amour courtois* (*courtly love*) seem to be ill-defined notions that create great confusion. This distinction becomes very important when we analyse genres such as the romances. Famous twelfth century romances such as Chrétien de Troyes' *Lancelot*, *Cligés* and *Yvain*, or Thomas' *Tristan,* all develop different concepts of love. The only romance where we can indentify something called *amour courtois* is *Lancelot*. All the rest require different terms for the modes of love presented in them (Lazar 1989: VII). The Provençal term of *cortezia*, in many cases, simply completes a string of attributes that, taken together, represent courtliness: *onor* (honour), *valor* (worth), *joven* (youth or generosity), *mezura* (moderation). Cortezia can also appear as part of a conventional formulaic phrase such as *cortezia e joven* (courtliness and youth). In general terms, *cortezia* designates a group of social and moral virtues, as opposed to *vilania*, which represents a whole set of anti-courtly characteristics (greed, cowardice, avarice, disloyalty, vulgarity). In a further attempt to define *cortezia,* Lazar makes *pretz* (*valor*), *mezura* and *joven* its three cardinal components (Lazar 1989: viii). It is, therefore, obvious that the traditional confusion and mistake in applying the generic terms *courtliness* or *courtly love* to a complex body of literature, stems from the difficulty in defining each of these medieval notions of love. The diversity and complexity of these conceptions of love is determined both by the methods the authors and the artists

[21] On page 519, analysing the spirit of Chrétien's romances and especially Guinevere and Lancelot, Gaston Paris writes that "dans aucun ouvrage français, autant qu'il me semble, cet *amour courtois* n'apparait avant *Le Chevalier de la Charette*" (My translation: "as far as I know, the *amour courtois* does not appear in any French work before *Le Chevalier de la Charette*")

chose in presenting and expressing love, but also by other literatures, including Arabic, which are crucial to the development of modes of love and poetry. It also needs to be said that love in the Middle Ages was not expressed only in a courtly manner, but there are works that used parody, irony and even obscenity to present it. In his essay *Carmina Erotica, Carmina Iocosa*: *the body and the bawdy in medieval love songs*, Moshé Lazar underlines the distinction between love songs and mock-songs. It is important to remember that obscenity is never inherent in the genre of erotic love songs, but it characterizes a more exhibitionist and carnivalesque genre, which is the mock-song (Lazar 1989: 260).

Fin'amor is expressed in the love poetry of the troubadours. This love poetry is called *cansos*, and are formulated within a conception of extra-marital love. Yet, the troubadour's art consisted of sublimating and disguising metaphorically and metonymically any sexual reality inside the courtly register. The disguising devices such as euphemisms, conventional signs and ambiguous meanings of words create the fictional framework of the poetical texts in which we have to discuss erotic expressions. Moshé Lazar argues that we cannot assign to the fictional married lady in the *cansos* a historical reality. She could have been a real person just as well as an object of desire and wishful dreaming or an anonymous desirable body in the audience. The conclusion always remains that *fin'amor*, as poetically represented in the cansos remains adulterous beyond any doubt (Lazar 1989: 250-251).

Some of the expressions recurring in the *fin'amor* vocabulary are metonyms such as *lo al* (the other part) and *del plus* (the surplus). These words are frequently found in Provençal songs and stand for sexual intercourse (Lazar 1989: 253). The words used by the troubadours in expressing love are at a distance from the obscene. The obscene mock-songs are called *tensos* (debate songs) in Provençal.

Cortezia, that is *fin'amor*, as we concluded above, is related to two fundamental notions: *mezura* and *joven. Mezura* (moderation) means knowing how to live, modesty, self-control, and balanced feelings and reason. It also signifies conformity to the love code of the *troubadours*: For instance, the lady lacks 'moderation' if she doesn't reward a faithful and courteous lover. We can say that *mezura* is in the life of each individual what *cortezia* is for the life in common, for the 'worldly' life. *Cortezia* qualifies the equilibrium, the moderation of acts and gestures of a perfect knight among those who surround him and his moral and social behaviour; *mezura* implies the interior discipline of the *courtly lover*, a reasonable attitude towards the beloved lady, the moderation of desires, the patience and the humility (Frappier 1973: 7).

The term *joven,* a masculine noun signifying *jeunesse* (*young age*), and whose exact equivalent we cannot find in the Northern *courtoisie*, doesn't correspond especially to the

young age or the typical joyous spirit of young people. It is mostly translated as a spontaneous attitude, without hidden thoughts or calculations in showing generosity, in offering magnificent gifts and in paying court to the ladies, which is called *ben domneiar* (Frappier 1973: 7).

The status of the lady and the lover's concern for her reputation impose on the lovers the law of *bien celar* or discretion to protect themselves**.** Secrecy is an essential rule of *fin'amor,* not necessarily as precaution but as something conveying a sacred meaning. In this delicate situation which can turn happiness into sadness, the lover has to prove balance between reason and passion (Frappier 1973: 8).

Another related concept to *fin'amor* is that of joy (Fr. *joie*). The concept is given a spiritual content and occurs very often in the works of the *troubadours*. *Joi* (masculine noun), or the feminine *joie*, probably derived from the Latin *gaudium* (*joy*) or *joculum* (*game*) expresses an interior exaltation, a sort of liveliness so powerful that the whole spirit feels revived. *Joi* does not appear separate from the love desire when the *troubadours* associate it with spring, birds, the thought or the presence of women. One can conclude that *joi* personifies women or that it is a synonym of *fin'amor* (Frappier 1973: 8-9).

Another interesting point of view concerning *fin'amor* belongs to Trond Kruke Salberg (1986). Salberg questions whether it was the troubadours and Minnesänger who "discovered love" or whether we have to go further back to Antiquity to find the answer? Salberg's answer is that *courtly love* was formulated in the Middle Ages and it was only in an insignificant degree affected by the models of Antiquity. There are references to Ovid in Andreas Capellanus' work on *courtly love*, *De amore. Courtly love* is the modern term for what was called the *fin'amor* in the Middle Ages, that is the love ideal that developed in France and in some other European countries at the climax of the medieval cultural development. This is expressed in Andreas Capellanus' *Tractatus de amore* (c. 1186). Andreas Capellanus was a cleric at the court of Marie of Champagne in Troyes. His contemporary writer (but also opponent on the theme of love) was Chrétien de Troyes, who also belonged to the same milieu. According to Salberg, *Tractatus* represents the official and dominating view on the courtly ideal. What could have been the ancient models for this ideology? Most probably Ovid's work referred to in the *Tractatus*, namely *Artis amatoriae* (The art of Love).

The first two books in *Tractatus* are an introduction in the art of *courtly love*, while the third book seems to condemn the *fin'amor*. Two arguments characterize Andreas work: the first one is that *courtly love* (per definition extra marital) is to be preferred to sexual intercourse between husband and wife unless the purpose of the intercourse is to conceive

children. The act is seen as sacrament. Yet, in the last part of the treatise it is specified that the introduction into the art of love is supposed to help the initiated refrain from it (avoid it). Andreas' *Tractatus de amore* can actually be epitomized as an apology for the *fin'amor*. The principle of the courtly ideal is equality of role between lovers and leads to emancipation. Women can, if they are in love with a man, ask him in a nice and courtly manner to share that feeling. What matters for both sexes is to master the doctrine of love so as to appreciate the moral qualities more than the other's looks. When the knight and his lady seem to have different roles, there must be a superficial evaluation that opposes the nature and inner logic of the ideal presented by Andreas Capellanus (Salberg 1986: 127).

According to *Tractatus,* there are four stages in a true love relationship: to promise, to kiss, the pleasure of caressing and in the end the woman gives her whole body (bok I, chap. VI, dialogue E: A *nobleman addresses a noblewoman* – Walsh 1982, pp. 96-121). The connection between love and moral is the central point in the *fin'amor* ideology: love is everyone's good source and origin, without it no one on earth can perform good deeds. The most fundamental of Andreas' 31 rules is that "Honesty of character alone makes a man worthy of love": (rule XVIII) "Probitas sola quemque dignum facit amore." (Walsh 1982: 282-283). "The true lover regards as good nothing except what he thinks pleasing to his beloved: (rule XXV) "Verus amans nil bonum credit nisi quod cogitat coamanti placere." (id.), and "a true lover in his affection desires the embraces of none other than his partner: (rule XII): Verus amans alterius nisi suae coamantis ex affectu non cupit amplexus" (id.).

In the courtly culture one is loved for one's beauty and moral qualities: courtesy, generosity, courage etc. These qualities are objective and can be noticed by everyone. Thus one can easily fall in love with someone one has never seen, but whose virtue and beauty is known by reputation. Love has not only a psychological, but also a juridical aspect. It does not last forever. In one chapter Andreas describes how love is born, in another how it grows, in a third chapter how it decreases and in the end how it ends. It is not an undesired phenomenon: one can be judged by a court of ladies to offer his/ her love to someone or not.

With Chrétien de Troyes we experience the criticism of *la fin'amor* and the redefinition of *courtly love*. Although Chrétien and Andreas wrote in the same period and at the same court, there are a couple of points that are different between their doctrines on love. The main difference between them is the view on the relationship love and marriage. The *fin'amor* is, to begin with (as can also be seen in the troubadour poetry) love outside marriage. But Andreas says one must also love his/ her wife/ husband, but that this feeling is something completely different from the real love between lovers. If a woman wants to give her love to a new lover, she is judged by the court of ladies who decide she can do that only

after she has married her first lover. ”When a marriage-alliance develops, it forcibly puts love to flight, as we are clearly taught by the instruction of some lovers” (Walsh 1982: book II, p. 233). In the light of Andreas’ rule, the love between Floire and Blancheflor, whose purpose in the story is to get married, is meant to meet a sudden end. Chrétien also portrays *courtly love* affairs between husband and wife. Several of his novels are marriage dramas. For him, the fundamental principle of the *fin’amor* is the important motif: he who has a beautiful and noble girlfriend or wife, must be better because of her: ”Amander doit de bele dame,/ Qui l’a a amie ou a fame” (*Yvain ou li Chevaliers au Lion*). There is no fundamental difference between love in marriage and ”the real love between lovers” (Salberg 1986: 132).

The other important difference between Chrétien and Andreas is a general reaction against the formalistic and regulated *courtly love* doctrine. Chrétien has no sympathy for the spirit behind the activity of the court of ladies. If one felt unjustly treated in a love affair, they could present the case before such authority as la cour des dames. The trial and the verdict were based on a set of rules and previous similar cases. It is difficult for the modern reader to have a clear picture of these trials (Salberg 1986: 133-134). In an important paragraph, the beginning of *Yvain*, Chrétien complains of the decline suffered by love: ”Ore est amors tornee a fable/ Por ce que cil, qui rien n’an santent,/ Díent qu’il aimment, mes il mentent,” (Today love has become idle talk, because those who don’t feel anything say they love but they lie” – *Yvain ou li Chevaliers au Lion* vss. 24-26). The risk of such idle talk may be the reason why Chrétien prefers to portray relationships between husband and wife or love affairs that lead to marriage. There is also a positive reference to marriage in the *courtly love* doctrine. Andreas says: 11. ”One should not seek love with ladies with whom it is disgraceful to seek marriage: (rule XI) Non decet amare quarum pudor est nuptias affectare (Walsh 1982: 282-283). It seems *courtly love* needed marriage as a hypothetical criterium, and Chrétien sees the practical consequence of this thought (Salberg 1986: 135).

5.3.2. Troubadours and trouvères

The name of the *troubadours* in the south and the *trouvères* in the north of France derives from the verb *trobar, trover* which means to *invent or create*.

As I have shown above, the troubadours are the poets of *fin’amor*. Some of the most famous of them are Guillaume de Poitiers, Jaufré Rudel, Marcabru, the jongleur who wrote between 1130-1150 and then Bernard de Ventadorn, Raimbaut d’Orange, Giraut de Borneil, Arnaut Daniel, Bertrand de Born, Peire Vidal. According to Jean Frappier, these troubadours belonged to different social classes. Some of them were great seigneurs, others were of lower noble rank, poor knights, secular clerics or even sons of *vilains*, in the sense

of low-born men. One of these low-born troubadours was Bernard de Ventadour. The Encyclopedia Britannica adds that Bernard travelled to England between 1152-1155, where he lived at the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine. He wrote short love poetry which expresses emotional power combined with poetry delicacy and simplicity. The amazing friendship bonds established between the nobles and the low-born, such as the relationship between a troubadour and a seigneur, is a remarkable phenomenon that characterizes the social relations in the South of France. Jean Frappier explains that the cause of such phenomenon lies rather in the feudal society in the south than in the north, or Oïl region. Furthermore, Frappier asserts that the class differences in the South are abolished by the unique universe created by the exaltation and the conventions of *fin'amor*. In this universe, the troubadour can overcome his humble condition (Frappier 1973: 6). The poetry of the troubadours is always accompanied by music. Although this love poetry give a general impression of monotony, there are slight variations which characterize each of the troubadours. In expressing the emotional power mentioned above, Bernard de Ventadour prefers the theme of *joi*, the joy or the game of love. As it was mentioned above, the troubadour used the *canso* to sing his love for a married woman. In his *cansos*, the troubadours used the notions of *mezura*, *joven* and *joi,* which I analysed above. According to the Jesuit priest and medievalist Alexander Joseph Denomy (1947) the Christian clerics, the class which opposed the secular clerics, regarded the type of love called *fin'amor* as nothing but heresy. According to Jean Frappier, the troubadours never suggested that the perfect love they celebrated was compatible with the principles of the church. However, they did not regard themselves as guilty of any immorality. The troubadours intended to give the ethics of *fin'amor* a noble and religious aspect by idolatrizing the lady and their love (Frappier 1973: 10). The conventions established by the *fin'amor* imply mutual faithfulness between the lady and the lover. The husband, that is the seigneur, is, by convention, out of the game. The practice of *fin'amor* resembles, as Frappier sustains, the feudal allegiance between the vassal to his seigneur. As I mentioned earlier in my thesis, troubadours use metonymy in order to hide the meaning or the identity of a thing or person. The troubadours address the lady, called *domna* in the language d'oc, with *mi dons* or *midons* (my lord). By this example of the masculine form used to address the lady, Frappier shows that the troubadours imitated the gestures and rituals of the feudal homage when they rendered homage to their love. Two accompanying gestures were *immixtio mannum*, that is when the vassal folded and placed his hands in the hands of his lord, while kneeling down, and *osculum* or the kiss (Frappier 1973: 10).

Another example of feudal imitation is the introduction of the juridical term *sesine,* which was adopted in the vocabulary of *courtly love*, that is *amour courtois*, by the trouvères. *Sesine* means being in possession of a fief and is used by a famous trouvère called Béroul in his *Tristan* romance (1150). *Sesine* appears in the romance in the scene when Tristan and Isolde are about to be separated. Isolde gives Tristan a ring, while Tristan leaves his dog Husdent with Isolde as a memory and a token of their love (Frappier 1973: 11). By adopting this ritual of perfect love (*fin'amor*), Tristan and Isolde assure one another of their equal passion, a fundamental theme in *Tristan*. Béroul's *Tristan* does not correspond entirely to the conceptions of the troubadours. Equally important is the fact that passages differ from one version of a romance to another and this is due to the evolution of the concepts both in time and space. We will have a clearer picture of this evolution towards the end of this thesis.

During the twelfth century, a part of the region of the language d'Oïl, was ruled by the Anglo-French house of Plantagenet. The other great powers were Blois-Champagne, Flanders and the Capetians. The conceptions of *courtoisie* seem to be determined by the same causes as *cortezia* in the region of the The language d'oc. The lady played an important educational role in the formation of the new ideal in both regions. Frappier concludes the study presented above by placing the origin of *courtoisie,* in its larger sense, in the Northern aristocratic environment of France, under the unique influence of the Oc poetry. There is no need to bring more arguments for the literary innovation brought by the troubadours through the *fin'amor*. Yet, the novelty brought by the *trouvères* is the courtly romance, or the so-called *roman courtois,* which introduces very original characters compared to the Oc poetry. The semantic difference between the poetry and the romance lies in the latter's greater focus on the analysis of feelings and of love in its incipient phase, on how it grows and how young people deal with it. It is a more objective, almost medical representation of love. Besides, the psychological aspect gains more interest among the romance writers (Frappier 1973: 13).

Amour courtois implies an inner examination that the lovers undertake in order to overcome their confusion and question their conscience about the proper rules of conduct. The trouvères, who could be of aristocratic or of humble origins, were first connected with feudal courts but later found middle-class patrons. They pleased their audiences by combining stylized themes and traditional metrical forms. In all the romances, from those inspired from the Antiquity such as the *Roman de Thèbes,* the *Roman d'Eneas,* the *Roman de Troie* to Thomas' *Tristan*, the *Lais* of Marie de France or the romances of Chrétien de

Troyes, we sense the moralizing voice of the trouvère, notwithstanding his complicity with either the hero or the heroine (id.).

Amour courtois tends to preserve the traditional morality and the conventions of the social and religious laws. Contrary to the *fin'amor*, it seems to be compatible with marriage and hostile to adulterous relationships. According to the new conventions expressed through *amour courtois* love-marriage is possible. At that time, during the second half of the twelfth century, marriages were still contracts based on interests rather than feelings. The church preached procreation, but condemned passionate love within marriage (Frappier 1973: 14).

5.3.3. Love and chivalry

Another remark Jean Frappier made in his study on the conception of *courtoisie* and *courtly love* (here I mean both *fin'amor* and *amour courtois*) concerns the relationship the aristocracy of both regions could establish between battle and love. While the troubadours seem to have made no connection between the two, the trouvères never stopped associating amour *courtois* with chivalry (Frappier 1973: 15). Before I go on to analyse the reasons which led to the development of such a relationship in the North, I must clarify what I mean by chivalry. The Oxford English Dictionary defines chivalry as follows: "the contemporary name for the 'men-at-arms', or mounted and fully armed fighting-men, of the Middle Ages." The term chivalry equally expresses "bravery or prowess in war; warlike distinction or glory [...], the brave, honourable, and courteous character attributed to the ideal knight." Earlier in the thesis I have written about a special category of nomadic, disinherited nobles who enjoyed mundane life, but whose social condition was in decline. In their romances, the trouvères offered these nomadic nobles an image of courtly heroes. My assumption is, therefore, that the myth of the chivalrous knight began by turning this nomadic image into an ideal. The Old French for knight is *chevalier*, and to the ideal knight was attributed a brave, honourable, and courteous character.

In short, the theme of passionate love which inspired prowess created an entire literary genre that was to last, not only throughout the age of chivalry, but for many centuries to come. The spirit of courteousness created by the romances of chivalry spread to a large part of Europe, as well. Throughout my thesis I will analyse how this spirit reached Northern Europe, and especially Norway.

5.4. Courtly culture and courtly literature

One of the theories concerning the origin and the development of *courtoisie* belongs to Frappier. As we have seen in the chapters devoted to the definitions of *courtoisie* and

courtoisie-related concepts, it marked an increase in the respect paid to the lady. By her contribution to a change in the social order of the time and to the introduction of a new ideal, the lady brought many changes both in literature and in the way of life (Frappier 1973: 12). A more elaborate view was shared by the American author and historian Barbara Wertheim Tuchman in her book *A Distant Mirror*: *The Calamitous Fourteenth Century* (1979), which is not only an overview of fourteenth century medieval England, but also a fairly concise discussion of *courtly love*. As convened above, the term *courtly love* is used generically, and it denotes both *fin'amor* and *amour courtois*. According to Tuchman, the essence of *courtly love*, as seen in connection with *courtoisie* is as follows:

"As its justification, *courtly love* was considered to ennoble a man, to improve him in every way. It would make him concerned to show an example of goodness, to do his utmost to preserve honor, never letting dishonor touch himself or the lady he loved. On a lower scale, it would lead him to keep his teeth and nails clean, his clothes rich and well groomed, his conversation witty and amusing, his manners courteous to all, curbing arrogance and coarseness, never brawling in a lady's presence. Above all, it would make him more valiant, more preux; that was the basic premise. He would be inspired to greater prowess, would win more victories in tournaments, rise above himself in courage and daring, become, as Froissart said, 'worth two men.' Guided by this theory, woman's status improved, less for her own sake than as the inspirer of male glory, a higher function than being merely a sexual object, a breeder of children, or a conveyor of property." (Tuchman 1979: 66-68)

A Renaissance outlook on this medieval ideal is presented by Baldassarre Castiglione, Italian diplomat and author of *Il Cortegiano* (*The Courtier*). *Il Cortegiano* was published in 1528 and became one of the most popular books at the European courts. Through the narrative dialogue founded on classicism, the book presents the perfect image of the modern nobleman. The nobleman's main profession remains the warrior, because a good warrior makes a good gentleman. Although Castiglione wrote in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the ideals he presents stem from the early ideals expressed by the twelfth century *courtoisie*. Following the definitions and examinations undertaken above, I believe it is possible to use the more general term of *courtly culture* in connection with *courtoisie* and the enduring culture created around it.

To underline the importance of recognizing the emergence of courtly culture in the Middle Ages, I find it relevant to refer to Malcolm Vale's work *The princely court*: *medieval courts and culture in North-West Europe 1270-1380* (2001). Vale argues against the assumptions of cultural historians and historical anthropologists that the court was an invention and phenomenon of the period between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Vale asserts that criteria and methodology for defining the structure and functions of "courts" should be based on the courts that already existed in the later Middle Ages.

5.4.1. *Chansons de geste* versus *romans courtois*

The cultural, domestic and social environment around the courts led to the formation of a rich tradition of studies on this topic both within historical anthropology, but also political, art and literary history. Literary history records the emergence of a scribal art that had been acquired after conversion to Christianity (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 316). Jónas Kristjánsson also underlines the fact that most of what was written in that period in languages other than Latin, that is the vernacular, whether in verse or prose, was religious or didactic. Some occasional pieces of history, chiefly of annalistic or chronicle kind, were also written. The eleventh century witnessed the emergence of a group of anonymous epic works that have sometimes been called ”popular” or ascribed to ”the people” (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: id.). The French heroic and epic poetry, which are of great concern for the literature of Norway and Iceland, were called *chansons de geste*. These romances told of the heroic deeds of the knights fighting with or against Charlemagne. As the name suggests, the *chansons* seem to have been sung or chanted. Of the more than eighty *chansons* remaining, the masterpiece is the *Chanson de Roland,* which narrates the death of Charlemagne's nephew, Roland, in a rear-guard action against the Saracens at Roncevaux in 778. The Chanson de Roland was also translated into Old Norse under Haakon Haakonsson between 1220 and 1250, under the name of *Karlamagnús Saga*.

The *chansons de geste* were followed in the second half of the twelfth century by another group of courtly romances or romances, also known as *romans courtois*. The origin of courtly literature was thus associated with the emergence of the courtly romances. There are different theories that have evolved over one hundred years of scholarship concerning the nature of the romances, but I choose more recent theories that I consider relevant. Jónas Kristjánsson suggests that the *chansons the geste* ”reflect their popular origins as oral entertainment, while the romances in contrast were made to be read aloud [...], were composed in aristocratic and educated circles, and we usually know the names of the poets.” A characteristic feature of the romances is delicate and elaborate analysis of human feelings. The thoughts and emotions of the actors are often conveyed through their own words in dialogue or soliloquy. The leading men are not only formidable warriors, as in the epic literature, but they are also celebrated for their courtesy, munificence and magnanimity (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 316-317). Christopher Baswell adds that the clerics who turned antique story into French and Anglo-Norman romances were also working within, and helping mould the contemporary vernacular modes of *chanson de geste* and romance. The *chanson de geste*, which was long thought to be the earlier genre, was simpler in narrative form and style, loosely structured in irregular ten-syllable lines linked by end-line

assonance. Whatever its still-debated origins, Baswell sustains, *chanson de geste* was being produced in the same time and place that witnessed early romance, and the *romans d'antiquité* (Antiquity romances) exploit not only themes of heroic battle and territorial conquest, but they also explore themes of romance: private quest, the role of women, eroticism, marvels and prodigies. Their heroes must often choose or negotiate between the claims of public heroism and private experience (Baswell 2000: 32).

Roberta L. Krueger's introduction in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance* (2000) gives an elaborate account of the romances and their nature. An important point that will also constitute the focus of my thesis is the evolution of the medieval romance which, according to Krueger, is one of translation and transformation, adaptation and refashioning, of fertile intertextual and intercultural exchange among the linguistic and political entities of medieval Europe (Krueger 2000: 1). Medieval romance gained great popularity in both France, Germany, England, The Netherlands, Italy, Scandinavia, Portugal, Greece and Spain. Although the romance is historically related to the creation of elite lay culture in courts and wealthy households throughout the European Middle Ages, romance narratives are not only reflections of courtly ideals. The time-span in which the circulation and transformation of the romances took place is between 1150 and 1600.

An additional feature of the romance, as presented by Krueger, is that it derives from the Old French expression "mettre en romanz" which means to translate into the vernacular French (Krueger 2000: 1). Consequently, many kinds of vernacular narratives were called "romans", "contes" (tales) or "estoires" (stories, histories). Medieval romances are a dynamic network of fictions, written first in verse and then in prose, which recount the exploits of knights, ladies and noble families seeking honour, love and adventure. The rich spectrum of medieval romance have themes and issues which intersect with virtually every aspect of medieval social and cultural life (Krueger 2000: 2).

Early romance literature was divided into three groups or "matters", depending on the origins of the subjects the poets treated: the "matter of Greece and Rome", the "matter of Britain/Brittany" and the "matter of France". The first group consists of imaginative retellings of classical epics with distinctive additions such as descriptions of extraordinary objects and deeper analyses of sentimental affairs. These retellings were especially concerned with the Trojan War and the siege of Thebe. The "matter of Britain/Brittany" told tales of King Arthur and his knights as well as of Tristan and other heroes. In an article dedicated to *The Origins of the Arthurian Legend and the Matter of Britain/Brittany*, Trond Kruke Salberg, explains the ambiguity concerning the origin of the matter of "Britain". Resuscitating the *théorie insulaire* (the insular theory) of Gaston Paris (1888) and the

théorie continentale (continental theory) of Ernst Zimmer (1890), Salberg considers three aspects of the origin of the Celtic themes, namely the Arthurian legend, the Breton lais and the Irish connection.[22] With regard to the extent in which the matter of Britain is Arthurian literature, its origin is rather continental than insular. Marie de France, the author of the Breton lais, begins by saying that she will tell the stories ”about which the Bretons have made the lays”, but the first story took place ”in Lesser Britain long ago”, while other stories took place in Great Britain. No doubt the word ”Breton” becomes ambiguous. It could mean the inhabitants of the island before the Saxon conquests. Yet, two edifying examples lead to the conclusion that the lais of Marie de France are Breton and not British. Firstly, the Celtic words quoted in Marie's lais are Breton, not Welsh, and secondly, the preface of the translations commissioned by Haakon Haakonsson writes: ”*sy ra Brætland er liggr i Frannz*, that is ”Southern Britan that is situated in France.” (Salberg 1994: 11-16).

As for the insular theory, Salberg resorts to history in order to explain its element of truth as regards the matter of Britain in general. The people involved in the Norman Conquest were Franco-Breton conquerors who came into direct contact with the still independent Welsh. Since both the Welsh and the newcomers knew stories about Arthur and his men, it is easy to imagine them comparing notes. The Welsh and the Bretons could still understand each other's language, and mutual influences between continental Arthurian literature and Welsh Arthurian literature are therefore evident (Salberg 1994: 16).

The third aspect regarding the origin of the Celtic themes, the Irish connection, comes in to question the insular theory and stems from the structuralistic view that all stories have, in a sense, the same structure. Although the similarities were established at a remarkably low level of abstraction, Irish and continental stories have striking common details. Chrétien de Troyes' *Chevalier au lion* is itself an example of this. Besides, the Irish influence is certain, but the stories must have reached France via a British people, who could only have been the Welsh. As for direct contacts between Ireland and Brittany, both commercial and missionary contacts are recorded. Salberg argues against the idea that heathen stories would not be promoted by Christian missionaries by underlining the fact that the monks were the ones who wrote down the stories and by giving the example of Ulster-cycle material that was adapted to serve the purposes of Christian propaganda. To conclude, there is no reason to doubt that the Bretons of the early Middle Ages received narrative material from the Irish. As for the validity of the insular theory, the only reasonable

[22] On the one hand, Gaston Paris asserts that the matter of Britain had gone from the Welsh and English to the Norman conquerors of England after 1066, while Zimmer's position is that the matter of Britain was communicated to the people of Northern France by their Celtic speaking neighbours in Lesser Britain or Brittany.

conclusion is that ”the contribution of the Welsh *may* have been relatively modest and that it is *certain* that the contribution of the Continental Bretons must have been very significant (Salberg 1994: 18-20).

Most of the tales telling the ”matter of Rome” and the ”matter of Brittany” were written in rhyming pairs of eight syllables verses. The Old French octosyllabic couplets soon became the preferred mode for the clerics who told tales of love and adventure to aristocratic audiences in the francophone circles of England and France (Krueger 2000: 2). The ”matter of France” springs from the *chansons the geste* and especially from the story of Charlemagne.

Romances with the action set in both the ”British” and the ”Breton” world, such as the *lais* of Marie de France and the works of Chrétien de Troyes, which are tales of noble love and chivalric prowess related to Arthurian lore, all gained tremendous popularity.[23] In addition to the stories of King Arthur and his knights, another legend recounting the adulterous affair between Tristan, nephew of King Mark, and Queen Iseut (Isolde) circulated orally in Celtic culture and inspired some of the earliest romance fictions. The tale of Tristan and Iseut’s tragic love travelled widely in Europe and Scandinavia throughout the Middle Ages.

5.4.2. *Romans d’aventure* and *romans idylliques*

Besides the *romans courtois,* there are also minor kinds of narratives such as the *fabliaux,* the *romans d’aventure* (adventure romances) and the *romans idylliques* (idyllic romances). *Fabliaux* are short verse narratives, comic and satiric in mode, with subjects often drawn from everyday life (Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 317).

Laura Hibbard Loomis, in *Mediæval Romance in England, A study of the sources and analogues of the non-cyclic metrical romances* (1960), calls the *romans d’aventure* non-cyclic romances.[24] According to Hibbard Loomis, the *romans d’aventure* were ”the local legends, the traditional tales, which poets could transform into romantic guise. [...] They imitated the style, epic or romantic, of the traditional cycles, and they developed to the full the formulas of speech and theme, of incident and character, in short, the stock materials of mediæval fiction” (Loomis 1960: iii). Another view on the nature of the *romans d’aventure* belongs to Jónas Kristjánsson (1997: 317) who claims that they resemble the *lais*

[23] Through her lais, Marie de France mostly explored the relationship between husband and wife or discussed the destinies of young lovers who marry at the end, unless tragedy strikes them.

[24] The opposite of non-cyclic romances are the famous cycles of Carolingian, Arthurian and of pseudo-classical tales which were the fashion for court circles, for the literary elect.

on subjects from the ”matter of Britain”, but they are kept separate because their action is not set in the ”British”/ ”Breton” or Celtic-world.

The scholars have not yet agreed upon a clear difference between *romans d'aventure* and *romans idyllique*, hence the romance I have undertaken to analyse, *Floire et Blancheflor,* is defined as a *roman d'aventure* by Jónas Kristjánsson (1997: 317), as a *roman idyllique* by Myrrha Lot-Borodine (1913: 53-61) and as both by Franciscus Catharina de Vries (1966: 54). Patricia Grieve (1997) describes the romance as a tale of star-crossed lovers and of religious conversion with a long-lived and multifaceted career in France, Germany, England, Flanders and Holland, Italy, Spain and Portugal.

5.4.3. The authors and the audience of the courtly romances

Early romances were written in verse and meant to be read out loud. Roberta L. Krueger (2000: 3) adds: ”[...] they often display their author's sense of both literary aesthetics and oral performance. Drawing their material from a broad range of sources that included folktales, vernacular epics and saints' lives, courtly poetry, classical Latin literature and contemporary chronicles, romance authors self-consciously blended ancient and contemporary stories into new shapes, created characters who appealed to the sentimental, moral and political concerns of their audience, and drew attention to their own art as they did so.” But who attended the public reading of these romances?

According to Krueger, both noble male and female patrons (counts and kings, ladies queens and countesses) were eager to listen to stories in which their own ideals and anxieties were reflected. Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner (2000) is more explicit. Romances like those of Chrétien de Troyes and his contemporaries called for a public able to recognize the interplay of repetition and transformation. Bruckner notes the striking positioning of the romance along a triangle that links author, story and public. The romancer appears as a clerkly figure whose school-training in rhetoric enabled him to instruct a particular segment of society by telling stories that took place at some distance from both narrator and public, whether chronologically, linguistically, or geographically. The prologues of the romances establish an explicit contract between romancer and audience. The use of maxims demonstrates the author's learned stance and justifies his obligation to share what he knows, his *senz*, with the audience. Author and narrator cannot be fully separated; the storyteller is simultaneously a writing author and an inscribed narrator speaking directly to an audience of ”readers”. The ”readers” in the medieval context were frequently listeners, as romances were communicated orally (Bruckner 2000: 14). Yet, the persona of the narrating voice as

filter for the tale told, as well as link to the romance public, may vary considerably from work to work and even from one part to another in the same work (Bruckner 2000: 18).

The clerics, authors of the courtly romances, commissioned the composition of romances in manuscripts that could be circulated among court and family members, as well as passed along to foreign courts. Through this difussion, the audience diversified, and the manuscripts were recopied and re-adapted in fresh surroundings, in other households, in new linguistic and political terrains (Krueger 2000: 3-4). Despite the precarious conditions of manuscript culture, each romance is often preserved in multiple manuscripts. This phenomenon reflects both the long-lived appeal of the stories, but also their adaptability to the diverse contexts in which they were transposed.

To determine the authorship of the original, Leclanche follows an indication given by the German poet Konrad Fleck who translated the *Conte* during the thirteenth century and who named a certain Ruoprecht von Orbênt. Identifying the toponym Orbênt as Orbigny, Leclanche (1980: vol 2., p. 44) concludes that, if Fleck was right, the author of the *Conte* was a certain Robert d'Orbigny. [25]

The author of the *Conte* was supposedly familiar with the old Latin *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* or with other works in the vernacular that the laic public might have known. It was common to allude to such works at the time *Floire et Blancheflor* was written. The story of Apollonius of Tyre, which portrayed lovers separated by fate, has inspired certain searches of the narrative medieval literature. The author was surely familiar with the Genesis and Paradise (the garden of Eden), prototype of all medieval descriptions of *loci amœni*. He knew of Ovid and Virgil, as well as of lost poems about Biblis and Dido, the siege of Troy, *The romance of Thebes* or the *Alexander Romance*. The latter romances might have led the author to use the name of the pontoneer *Daire* in his story (Leclanche 2003: XV).

5.5. What are *riddarasögur*?

The *riddarasögur* are defined as translations of French romances, both *chansons de geste* and *romans courtois*, for an audience within the court of the Norwegian king Haakon Haakonsson. It is believed that the translations were done from King Haakon's intention to civilise Norwegian culture and court-life. He introduced the courtly ideals and inspired the composition of *Konungs skuggsjá* (*King's Mirror*), a didactic work which is entirely in the same courtly tone.

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[25] Leclanche (2003) notes that *Orbigny* is a municipality of Indre-et Loire, which was called *Orbineium* in certain Latin charters of that time.

According to Geraldine Barnes the main motifs of the *riddarasögur* are the quest for a bride, the restoration of the patrimony and the validation of identity, all of which makes them part of the continental European folktales and romances (Barnes 2000: 268). The continental romances are rich in surface attributes like the marvellous, the exotic, the mysterious, the improbable and the hyperbolic. These attributes are also taken into the *riddarasögur*. The underlying ethos, which differs from the idealistic values of the European chivalric romance, does not really fit in the saga pattern. Barnes' argument for the *riddarasögur* hero's lack of ethos is the little sense of motivation beyond his own self-interest. Typical of the continental chivalry, he is a king's son from Western or Eastern Europe, and the story chronicles his accession to the throne and the extension of his power. These processes entail either or both the restoration of his patrimony and the quest for a bride, travel to distant lands, battles against monstruous and human opponents, and the acquisition of new kingdoms (Barnes 2000: 268).

Another common motif in the *riddarasögur* is the lady's changing of identities with a serving-woman, like in *Perceval saga* and in *Tristams saga.* The sagas incorporate folktale-romance motifs into narratives that engage with the wider issues of chivalric education, obligation, and morality. The ethical dimensions of *Villmundar saga,* which borrows the motifs from the above-mentioned, are restricted to the wish-fulfilling pattern of folktale: Villmundr is the country-bred, socially inexperienced, but capable and prodigiously strong hero who finds himself married to Sólely, only by virtue of his muscle power.

The prevailing ideology of the *riddarasögur* is fundamentally secular. With the exceptions of *Mírmanns saga* and *Bærings saga,* confrontations between Christians and Saracens have more to do with the restoration of patrimony or the securing of a bride than with the reconquest of the Holy Land or the glorification and propagation of Christian faith (Schlauch 1973: 169). The ultimate aim in the *riddarasögur* is the acquisition, extension, and legitimization of power through marriage, conquest, and the validation of the hero's identity.

CHAPTER 6. ANALYSIS

A comparative analysis between the Old French *Floire et Blancheflor* and the Old Norse *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*

6.1. The editions used in the analysis

As I mentioned earlier in the chapter on sources, there are four manuscripts of the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* which are marked A, B, C and V. The scribe of manuscript A is picardesque, i.e. from the north of France, also called Picardy. The copy of the *Conte* found in this manuscript illustrates the adaptation of picardesque writing to the literary usage characteristic of the north of France at the end of the thirteenth century. The writing and the illustrations of manuscript B are characteristic of the Île-de-France workshops from the first half of the fourteenth century. The language of the copyist is the so-called ”francien” which was commonly used in Île-de-France and Champagne (centre-East) since the thirteenth century. Manuscript C, which dates from the fifteenth century, is an apograph of ms. A, and is therefore not included in this synopsis (Leclanche 1980: vol. 2, p. 28).

The basic manuscript must be chosen between A and B. While comparing all three copies ABV, one can notice that B changes the style, the syntax and the vocabulary more often than the other two. A and B belong to the same family called *continental vulgate* which was spread on the European continent. Since Édelestand Du Méril, who first found the edition of both versions of *Floire et Blancheflor*, most editors have related to manuscript A. Inspite its additions: the game of Barbarin, the suicide attempt in the lion den and Floire’s second *planctus* on the death of his parents, and abbreviations in the scene where Floire plays chess, this manuscript seems superior to B (Leclanche 2003: VII-VIII).

Manuscript V, which is in fact only a fragment consisting of 1247 verses, is an Anglo-Norman copy from the first half of the thirteenth century, i. e. the eldest that exists. The *insular vulgate* is represented by this fragment and by English and Icelandic manuscripts. By means of the Norse *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* and of the Middle English *Floris and Blauncheflur* it is, to a certain degree, possible to find the missing fragment in V, that is from verse 1156 on, in Leclanche’s 1980 edition, although the middle English romance has a tendency to abbreviate and the saga has an ending (from the couple’s trial on) that does not reflect the original French version.

The eldest manuscript which, according to Kalinke (1981) and Sävborg (2005), should be the one to compare translations with is V. Manuscript V, preserved at the Vatican library, has 98 parchment leaves and it was unknown until 1916. The copy of *Floire et*

Blanchefleur was made on two columns of 48 verses. The first verse corresponds to verse 133 in manuscripts A and B, and the last one, verse 1156, corresponds to verse 1606 in A and 1424 in B. V covers, as we can see, less than half of the *Conte*, if we consider that the lost part of the masnuscript was fairly identical to AB. Manuscript V belongs to the western dialect area (Anglo-Norman). According to Leclanche (1980), the manuscript has insular language characteristics which prove the effect of a century's interferences with the English pronunciation. It is believed that the translation into Old Norse of the *Conte* is based on manuscripts V. Since V is incomplete, I will follow manuscripts AB up to verse 133 where I will start looking at both AB and V. From where manuscript V ends, i.e. verse 1156, I will go back to AB and see the similarities with the saga.

As I mentioned earlier, *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* is preserved in a small Norwegian fragment from the beginning of the fourteenth century, NRA 65 (R) and two fifteenth-century Icelandic manuscripts: AM 489 4to (M) and AM 575a 4to (N). The Old Norse saga edition that I am using belongs to Eugen Kölbing an edition based on the AM 575a 4to manuscript. Kölbing (1896) regarded manuscript M as an extremely shortened and modified version of the original Norwegian. The Norwegian fragment (R) covers chapters XVII: 6 - XVIII: 1 in Kölbing's edition of the saga. According to Kölbing, manuscript R is superior to M, and he used it only to fill the gaps in N. Some places in the analysis I also refer to manuscript M, namely to the edition of Brynjolf Snorrason: *Saga af Flóres ok Blankiflúr* (1850).

Leclanche's (1986) translation of the romance into modern French and Birgit Nyborg's (2005) translation of the saga into modern Norwegian have also been consulted. Nyborg's translation is based on manuscript AM 489 4to. However, I chose to translate the quoted parts from the romance and the saga into English myself, following the text of the edition as closely as possible. In this attempt, I have not laid focus on a good idiomatic translation, but rather on a functional one.

The end of the saga is chivalric, and so is the *Romance*, that is the second version of the *Floire et Blancheflor*. Still, one cannot relate to it in this respect because its end is missing. A and B are intensely clerical, but they seem to have been contaminated by the *Romance* and by other translations. The saga starts ex-abrupto at verse 57 in the Old French romance. The part that is missing is the prologue where the genealogy of the main characters is established and the time of the events related in the romance is set.

6.2. How is the word *courtoisie* expressed in the Old French romance and in Old Norse saga?

Courtois in *the Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and *kurteiss* in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* are used as follows:

En la compaigne ot un François, chevalier et preu et *courtois* [...] (vss. 93-94 ms. A)	In the company (of the pilgrims) there was a Frenchman, a brave (wise) and courtly knight.	En í ferð með pílagrímum var einn valskr maðr, ok var riddari frægr ok kurteiss [...] (chapter I, 6)	In the company of the pilgrims there was a Frenchman, a handsome and courtly knight.
La meschine ert curteis et pruz, mult se feseit amer a tuz. (vss. 9-10 ms. V)	The servant (young woman) was courtly and wise (virtuous), She made herself greatly loved by all.	Konan var kurteis ok pruð, ok gerði sér hvern mann at vin [...] (chapter II, 3)	The woman was courtly and beautiful, and she made friends with everybody.

It seems that the word *kurteiss* is only used in relation to the Christian knight. The Muslim knights are not described as *kurteiss*. The woman (the captive) is also described as *kurteis* and beautiful. She was introduced into the royal household and became the queen's servant and confidante. No attempts were made to convert her, and she excites neither the king's desire nor the queen's jealousy (Kinoshita 2003: 224-5).

The epitaph on the tombstone where Blancheflore was supposed to have been buried wrote, in golden letters:

"Ci est la bele Blancheflur, a qui Floires ot grant amur." (vss. 400-401, ms. V)	Here lies the beautiful Blancheflor, whom Floire loved immensely.	Hér liggr undir en fagra Blankiflúr, sú er Flóres unni vel (chapter VII, 13, ms. AM 575a 4to) [...] hér hvílir líkamr hinnar fögru ok hinnar kurteisu Blankiflúr, er Flóres unni mest (ms. AM 489 4to).	Beneath (this stone) lies the beautiful Blankiflúr, whom Flóres loved greatly. [...] here rests the body of the beautiful and courtly Blankiflúr, whom Flóres loved most.

As we can see, *kurteisu* was only mentioned in the AM 489 4to manuscript. It is hard to guess why only the scribe of this manuscript used the word. Was it because he wanted to underline this particular quality in Blancheflor? Being beautiful is one of the qualities implied by the concept of *courtoisie*, but not the only one. Since *kurteisu* is enlisted together with beautiful, it must be the expression of her good nature and education, as well.

Floire's lament on the tombstone is the evocation of Blancheflor's beauty and exquisite qualities. Once again *kurteis* is underlined in the saga, while the romance does not

mention it, but devotes more words to the description of Blancheflor (see the lament further down in the analysis):

”[...] Þú vart lofs verð ok kurteis, ok hverr ungr ok gamall, sem sá þik, elskaði þik fyrir fríðleiks sakir.” (chapter VIII, 8, ms. AM 575a 4to)

”[...] You were praiseworthy and courteous, and both young and old (people) loved you for the generosity they saw in you. [26]

At midday, Floire and his men reached the town and met the pontoneer who sat on a squared marble block underneath a tree. He seemed rich judging by the silk clothes he was wearing. All the people who crossed the bridge had to pay him four pennies for themselves and extra four if crossing with a horse. When Floire showed him the ring, the pontoneer treated him well. There is a slight difference between the French and the Old Norse versions with regard to this episode:

Floires salue lu vassal; de tut ses deus l’ad salué et puis li ad l’anel duné, enseingnes de sun cumpaingnun qu’il le herberge en sa maisun et a sun busuing li cunseillt, si cum s’amur aver vuleit. Il ad l’anel ben cuneü; receü l’ad, ben l’en fu. Le son anel li ad baillé, a sa femme l’ad enveé que ben le herbert pur s’amur. (1128-1139, ms. V)	Floire greeted the vassal; he greeted him by all his gods and then gave him the ring, a sign from his companion (friend) that he should offer him shelter in his home and, in need, advise him, if he wanted Floire to return his friendship. He recognized the ring, received it and was content. He gave him (Floire) his own ring, sent him to his wife so she would host him well, for the love of him (her husband).	Gekk Flóres þá at honum ok heilsaði honum, ok sýndi honum fingrgullit þat, er honum var sent. Tók hann þá við ok þóttiz vita, at Flóres var bæði ríkr ok kurteiss. Sendi hann þá síðan til sinnar frú, at hon tœki sœmiliga við honum. Ok er hon sá fingrgull bónda síns, fagnaði hon þeim vel, ok skorti þá engan hlut. (chapter XIV, 11-12, ms. AM 575a 4to).	Then, Floire went to him and greeted him and showed him the golden ring, that was sent through (with) him. He received it and understood that Flóres was both rich and *courtois*. He sent him then to his wife, so she would take good care of him. And when she saw her husband’s golden ring, she treated them well, and did not let them miss anything.

The main difference between the two versions is the description of Flóres as rich and *kurteiss*, which is not directly present in the French version, but can be implied from the context.

To further impress the gatekeeper, Daire suggests that he should speak courtly to the gatekeeper and assure him of his esteem and respect. Again, although only implied in the Old French romance, *kurteisliga* is used in the Old Norse version:

[26] Manuscript AM 489 4to, chapter 6 writes: ”Þú vart bæði í senn, úng ok gömul; hverr maðr elskaði Þik;” (You were at the same time both young and old. Everybody loved you.) This utterance seems to be a bit confusing, and I therefore believe manuscript AM 575a 4to is closer to the original in this respect.

–”Sire, de gré. Je vos ai forment enamé. Or et agent a plenté ai, saciés k’assés vos en donrai, car vos m’avés bel acuelli, bel aparlé, vostre merci.” (vss. 2151-2156, ms. A)[27]	”Sir, with pleasure. I have become your friend. Gold and silver I have plenty of. You must know that I will give plenty, because you have received me well, spoken to me well, and this pleases me.	”at mér þykkir þú góðr maðr; en gull ok silfr skortir mik eigi, ok yfrit skal ek þér þat gefa, fyrir því at þú hefir við mik kurteisliga gǫrt ok mikla vingan birt.” (chapter XVII, 7, AM 575a 4to).	”I believe you are a good man. I have plenty of gold and silver, and I will offer you plenty, because you have been courteous to me and showed me great friendship.”

Contrary to his earlier opinion on Blankiflúr, the emir calls her (evil) whore and wants to kill them both when he finds them lying together: ”Ocirrai vos et la putain” (vs. 2677, ms. A), ”Vous ocirrai et la putain” (2465, ms. B), ”Ok þar fyrir skaltu deyja, ok hon, sú en vánda púta” (chapter XIX, 4, AM 575a 4to). This expression is the opposite of all earlier courtly descriptions of Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr. Floire tries to defend her and tells the king their story:

Flores respont: -”Por Diu, nel dites! Ainc millor cose ne veïstes. Ses amis sui, ele est m’amie, Trovee l’ai tant l’ai sivie.” (vss. 2681-2684, ms. A, vss. 2470-2473, ms. B)	Flores answered: ”For God, don’t say that! Never before has better human being lived. I am her sweetheart, and she is mine. I have found her after I have looked for her a long time.	”Herra,” sagði hann, ”kallið eigi Blankiflúr pútu, þvíat enga fái þér slíka í yðvarri borg! Nú ger við mik ok mæl, sem yðvarr er vili til, þvíat ek em hennar unnasti: var hon stolin frá mér, ok hér fann ek hana. (chapter XIX, 5, AM 575A 4to).	”Sir,” he said, ”don’t call Blankiflúr a whore, because you don’t get another one like her in your (polite form) castle! Now do with me and her what you are willing to, because I am her sweetheart: she was stolen from me, and I found her here.

6.3. Courtly love features in the Old French romance and in the Old Norse saga.

The love between Floire and Blancheflor grows with their age. Even in young age, they love each other tenderly:

”En þau váru mjǫk lík at vitrleik ok fríðleik, ok unnuz þau svá vel, at þegar er annat vissi nǫkkurn hlut, þá sagði hvárt oðru” (chapter III, 7).

They were much alike in wisdom and in beauty, and loved each other so dearly, that when one of them learnt something, they told each other immediately.

There are elements that occur in one version and are omitted or reduced in degree in another.

[27] Manuscript B is similar.

Al plus tost que suffri Nature en eus amer mistrent grant cure. En aprendre ourent bons sens, en retenir meillur purpens. Livres savent paenurs u aperneient parler d'amurs. En ço grantment se delitount, en cel livre ki il apernount (vss. 91-98, ms. V)	As soon as Nature allowed for it, they loved each other dearly. They were intelligent, and did their best to remember. They knew of heathen books in which they learnt (they spoke) of love. That's what they liked best in the books they learnt from.	En þegar er þau hǫfðu aldr til ok nattúru, þa tóku þau at elskaz af réttri ást. En þau námu þá bók, er heitir Óvidíus de arte amandi: en hon er gerð af ást, ok þótti þeim mikil skemtan ok gleði af, þvíat þau fundu þar með sína ást (chapter III, 8-9, ms. AM 575a 4to).	As soon as they reached the age and nature for that, they began to love each other truly. They read the book of Ovid called Ars Amatoria: it was about love, and they found much fun and pleasure in (reading) it, because there they found love.

In Old French, the passage with the elaborate description of King Félis' garden is longer in manuscript A, but absent in manuscript V and the saga. This has been interpreted as one of the many familiarities between the saga and manuscript V:

Un vergier a li peres Floire u plantee est li mandegloire, toutes les herbes et les flours qui sont de diverses coulours. Flouri i sont li arbrissel, d'amors i cantent li oisel. [...] (vss. 243-248, ms. A)	Floire's father had a garden where he planted mandragora, and all the plants and flowers which have various colours. The shrubs are in bloom and the birds sing of "amour" [...]
Adont lor veïssiés escrire letres d'amors sans contredire, et de cans d'oisiaus et de flors, letres de salus et d'amours. Lor graffes sont d'or et d'argent dont il escrisent soutiument. (vss. 259-264, ms. A)	Oh, if you had seen them engrave letters of love without opposition, write of birds' songs and of flowers and create songs and declarations of love[28]. Their grafts, with which they wrote beautifully, were made of gold and silver.

In the schoolroom scene, the friendship between Floire and Blancheflor is first given an erotic edge. Put to school by his father, Floire insists that Blancheflor share his lessons. This romance appears a century and a half before another famous couple, Paolo and Francesca from Dante's Inferno, who learn of love through their common reading.[29] Only manuscript

[28] The translation of *salus d'amours* into *declarations of love* is also based on Leclanche's own note of this lyrical formula.

[29] And she to me: "There is no greater sorrow/ than thinking back upon a happy time/ in misery— and this your teacher knows./ Yet if you long so much to understand/ the first root of our love, then I shall tell/ my tale to you as one who weeps and speaks./ One day, to pass the time away, we read/ of Lancelot— how love had overcome him./ We were alone, and we suspected nothing./ And time and time again that reading led/ our eyes to meet, and made our faces pale,/ and yet one point alone defeated us./ When we had read how the desired smile/ was kissed by one who was so true a lover,/ this one, who never shall be parted from me,/ while all his body trembled, kissed my mouth./ A Gallehault / indeed, that book and he/ who wrote it, too; that day we read no more." — Dante, *Inferno* vss. 121-138 translated by Allen Mandelbaum.

B mentions Ovid, the author of the book: ”Livres lisoient et autours,/ et quand parler oient d’amours/ Ovide, ou moult se delitoient/ es euvres d’amours qu’il ooient” (vss. 225-228 ms. B). Manuscripts A and V only mention that the children read a pagan book: ”livres lisoient paienors” (vs. 231, ms. A); ”livres savent paenurs” (vs. 95, ms. V). Ovid’s work, which is referred to in Andreas Capellanus’ *Tractatus* is *Artis amatoriae* (The art of Love). Ovid’s other important work on love is *Remedia amoris* (Remedies for Love). In fact, *courtly love* does not have much in common with the love doctrine presented by Ovid. According to Salberg (1986: 122-123), Ovid claims that love should be treated as something essentially frivolous. Ovid’s love is a risky game, and he gives advice so as to prevent that any harm should happen, or to cure an already existing wound, as in *Remedia.* The fundamental principle in *The Art of Love* is that love remains a game. The advice Ovid gives can be summerized in one word, the imperative: *lie* (id.). In other words, hiding one’s intentions, and arousing jealousy and suspicion characterize Ovid’s love, which remains valueless or only cynically and hedonistically justified. In *the Conte de Floire et Blancheflor/ Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* Ovid’s work is referred to as entertaining for the two children. They laugh at it, they enjoy reading it, but it is not suggestive of the kind of love story we are to expect.

Sorrow for the beloved one is another expression of *courtly love*. The reason given by Blancheflor’s mother, at King Felix’s command, was that Blancheflor had died of too much love for Floire:

”[...]-.VIII. jurz ot er que si est morte Blancheflur, sire, veire, pur vostre amur.” (vss. 437-439, ms. V)	”It had been eight days yesterday, since Blancheflor died, Sir, in fact, of loving you.”	” Fyrir VII nóttum”, segir hon. ”Af hverri sótt dó hon?” segir hann. ”Af þinni ást ofmikilli!” segir hon. (chapter VII, 18, ms. AM 575a 4to).	”Seven nights ago”, she said. ”Of what disease did she die? he said. ”Of loving you dearly”, she says.

Floire faints, first once, then three more times in less than an hour. Fainting is a common motif expressing *courtly love* in both romances and sagas of chivalry or even sagas of Icelanders (Sävborg 2005):

Quant Floires ot que ele est morte, eissi forment se descunforte, la culur pert, li quor li ment, tot pasmé chet el pavement. (vss. 442-445, ms. V)	When Floire learned that she was dead, he grew so desolated, turned pale and weak, and fell unconscious.	Sem hann heyrði, at hon var dauð, þá kunni hann því svá illa, at hann fell í óvit. (chapter VIII, 1, ms. AM 575a 4to)	As he heard that she was dead, he took it so badly that he passed out.
Il se est pasmé en mult poi d’ure treis feiz; [...] (vss. 452-453, ms. V)	In much less than an hour, he passed out three times [...].	En hann fell III sinnum á lítilli stundu í óvit; (chapter VIII, 3, ms. AM 575a 4to)	And he lost consciousness (fell unconscious) three

times in a short while.

When taken to the tomb, Floire faints once again without being able to utter a single word. When he regained consciousness, he sat on the tombstone and started to grieve for the loss of Blancheflor. His first lament, a monologue addressed to Blancheflor, is a repetition of what we have learnt throughout the romance/ saga so far, i. e. how they were born and grew up together, and how they loved each other dearly and exchanged letters of love, by using Latin as a secret language. The French poet is more generous in the description of Blancheflor, worshipping her beauty, knowledge, virtue, generosity and good nature in twenty verses, compared to one paragraph in the saga:

”Hoï! Blancheflur, cler visage! De quel que vus fuissez parage, unches dame de nul aage ne fud plus bele ne plus sage. Mort’ est’, preciose gemme! Ja mais nen ert plus bele femme. Bele, nus ne purrat ascrivre vostre beauté, ne buche dire, char la materie tele astreit que nus a chef ne la trarreit. Sun chef, sun crin, sun visage, kil delscrivereit trop sereit sage. Ha! tendre face culuree, Meudre de vus ne fu unches nee. Lu pris purrez estre de beauté e l’enseigne de casté. Humble estiez et honurable, et a busuig succurable. Petit et grant tut vus amount pur la bunté qu’en vus truvount.” (vss. 476-495, ms. V)	Oh, Blancheflor, pure face! Noble of birth or not, never has a woman of any age been more beautiful or wiser. Now you are dead, precious gem! There will never be a more beautiful woman. My beautiful friend, nothing could ever describe your beauty, and no mouth could ever express it, because the matter is so difficult that no head will try it; He who will describe her head, her hair, her face, will be very wise. Oh! tenderly-coloured face, better than you was never born. You bear the price of beauty and the sign of chastity. You were humble and kind, and helpful for those in need; servants or noble people, they all loved you for the generosity they found in you.	”Aufi, Blankiflúr! et skíra andlit! Slíka sá ek aldri jafnfríða eðr jafnvitra á þínum aldri, ok eigi mun verða getinn maðr svá vitr, at þinn fríðleik fái rítat með penna, þvíat aldri fær lyktir á gǫrt, svá er mikit efnit til. Þú vart lofs verð ok kurteis, ok hverr ungr ok gamall, sem sá þik, elskaði þik fyrir fríðleiks sakir.” (chapter VIII, 8, ms. AM 575a 4to)	Oh, Blankiflúr! pure face! I have never seen anyone more beautiful and smarter at your age, and never will someone be born so wise, to be able to describe your beauty in writing, because never before has anyone managed such difficult matter. You were praiseworthy and courteous, and both young and old (people), loved you for the generosity they saw in you.

In fact, there are several pair-couplets addressing Blancheflor and several pair-couplets addressing death, followed by two pair-couplets expressing Floire’s decision to commit suicide. These pair-couplets forming the *planctus*, meditations on suffering in verse, are replaced by monologues in the saga. Both monologues, the one addressing Blancheflor and the one addressing death, are shorter in comparison to the planctus.

Floire/ Flóres decides to go and find Blancheflor, no matter how many hindrances he might encounter. The author of the romance addresses his audience by the formula ”Seingnurs, ne vus esmerveillez” (”Sirs, don’t be astonished” vs. 642, ms. V), and assures

everyone that he who loves strongly and tenderly will achieve both acts of bravery and inconceivable wonders, as Calcide (OF)/ Kalídes (ON) and Plato witness. The saga author narrates the same idea without any addressing formulae. Manuscript A only mentions Caton, which probably led Kölbing to believe that the French romance did not mention Plato at all.[30] Yet both manuscripts B and V, mention "Calcide et (en) Platon" (vs. 896 ms. B 1980) and "Ço dist Caldes et Platun" (vs. 646, ms. V 1980). Leclanche's note to the verse in the French romance is that one cannot find such records in either Plato's *Timaeus*, the only work by him known at that time, or in Calcidius' (Chalcidius) *Commentary* to *Timaeus*.[31] The only quote Leclanche finds in Calcidius' *Commentary* is taken from Plato's *Republic*, which says that, in a dream, "la parte bestiale de l'homme ose n'importe quoi" (the bestial side of man dares anything).

Plato's love doctrine has nothing in common with *courtly love*, either. The main difference is that Plato subordinates love between individuals to a philosophical and metaphysical perspective. But the most obvious difference between Plato and la *fin'amor* is the absence of female worship in Plato. According to Plato, there are two types of love: a simple Aphrodite who makes inferior men love bodies, and a heavenly goddess who gives love to souls. The former is also called the unnoble love and can be directed towards small boys and women, whereas the latter is called the noble love and is directed exclusively towards young men. As for women, Plato believed there was hardly one who possessed a noble soul. Although noble love generally has to do with men, women can become noble when they are inspired by the divine power of Eros. This is exactly the opposite of what Andreas Capellanus describes as *courtly love*, that is which only can exist between persons of opposite sex (Salberg 1986: 124-125). In Plato's love doctrine there is a clear division of roles. The lover is always the eldest. In the doctrine of *courtly love* the two lovers have the same role in relation to one another, which means that *courtly love* represents a breakthrough in our cultural perception of women's fundamental subordination. It then seems reasonable to see the aspect of woman worship expressed by la fin'amor as a complementary phenomenon to the male hero worship, which was also important in the courtly doctrine (Salberg 1986: 126).

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[30] This note belongs to Birgit Nyborg in her translation of the saga into modern Norwegian in *Tre riddersagaer*, p. 70, 2003.

[31] The Encyclopedia Britannica (2003 DVD) writes that in the fourth century, the Christian exegete Calcidius (Chalcidius) prepared a commentary on Plato's *Timaeus,* which exerted an important influence on the medieval interpretation of the *Timaeus.* A Christian Platonic theism, based on the reading of the *Timaeus* with Christian eyes, and issuing in a strongly positive view of God's creation and a nobly austere but humane view of man's duty and destiny, had a strong influence in the Middle Ages, especially in the earlier period.

Floire expresses his extreme joy for the news that Blancheflor is alive, and he declares, without fearing whom might overhear, that he is going to marry her and no other, no matter what pains the king will take:

”De ço que vive est feit grant joie et dit, que lui ne chaut qui l’oie, li reis pur nient se penereit, ja autre femme ne espusereit.” (vss. 650-653, ms. V 1980)	Nú var Flóres kátr, er Blankiflúr lifði, ok mælti svá: ”Þarfleysu gerði konungr, er hann seldi Blankiflúr, fyrir því at ek skal aldri aðra konu eiga.” (chapter IX, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to).

Since Floire is steadfast in his decision to find Blancheflor, the king accepts, with resignation, to equip Floire with everything he needs for this pursuit. Floire decides to travel disguised as a merchant: ”cume marchant la querrai” (vs. 682, ms. V)/ ”En ek vil kallaz kaupmaðr ok með kaupum fara” (chapter X, 6, 18, ms. AM 575a 4to), and he asks his father for seven carrying mules: two charged with gold, silver and precious dishes, the third charged with huge amounts of money, two others with the finest fabrics and the last one with precious sable and marten skins. He asks for seven men to lead these mules and three (OF): ”trés esqüers” (vs. 692, ms. V)/ seven (ON): ”ok aðra VII menn ríðandi” (chapter X, 6, 15, ms. AM 575a 4to) riders who will prepare their food and take care of the horses. Besides all this, Floire asks his father to send his chamberlain along, as he is an excellent merchant and a good counsellor.[32]

For his departure, the king also gives Floire the goblet for which Blancheflor was sold:

”– Ceste, fait il, em porteras. Poet cel estre par li ravras sele chi pur li fud vendue.” – ”Sire, chi?”-”Blancheflur, ta drue.” (vss. 711-714, ms. V)	”Son minn”, segir hann, ”tak hér ker þat, er hon var keypt með!” þá svaraði Flóres: ”Hver var sú?” segir hann. ”Blankiflúr, unnasta þín!” (chapter X, 7-8, ms. AM 575a 4to).	”My son”, he said, ”take this (goblet) with you. Maybe you will get her who was sold for it. ”Sir, who?” ”Blancheflor, your beloved!”

This is one of many other places in the saga where one can notice a faithful translation.

Both the romance, all three manuscripts of the first version, and manuscript AM 575a 4to give a detailed presentation of the palfrey and the harness the king gives his son for the voyage. The harness was white on one side and bloodred on the other: ”chi de l’une part fud tut blanc/ de l’autre ruge cume sanc.” (vss. 717-718, ms. V)/ ”en hann var annan veg snjáhvítr, en annan veg blóðrauðr” (chapter X, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to). The horse-cover was made of a precious fabric, (embroidered with checker work OF): ”La susceles ert de palies

[32] Manuscript AM 575a 4to seems to be closer to the French manuscripts in the description of the goods and people Floire asks to take along in this voyage. AM 489 4to is slightly different.

cheres,/ si ert urlee tut a schecchers." (vss. 719-720, ms. V)/ "en guðvefjarpell var at þófanum" (chapter X, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to). The saddle and the frames had been cut from the rib of a whale: "Tute la sele et li arçun/ sunt de la cost de un peissun;" (vss. 721-722, ms. V)/ "En sǫðullinn var af fílsbeini" (chapter X, 10, ms. AM 575a 4to). The saddle was coloured in natural blue and red and it was carefully engraved in gold. The saddle was covered by a special brown fabric from Castile, decorated with golden flower embroidery: "La cuverture de la sele/ est de un brun palie de Castele,/ tute flocchee a fil d'orfrais," (vss. 727-729, ms. V)/ "en yfir sǫðlinum var ágætt pell vindverskt, ok allt gullskotit." (chapter X, 10, ms. AM 575a 4to).[33] The straps were made of silk and fastened to silver buckles. The stirrups were worth a town by themselves, since they were made of fine gold and niellowork. The belts of the harness were magnificent and very precious. (No other knight ever had anything more beautiful OF):

Li estriu valent un chastel,
d'or fin sunt uvree a neel.
Li freins est mult ben fait et chers,
unc ne vit plus bel chevalers. (vss. 735-738, ms. V).

En ístig ok allar gjarðir ok gagntǫk váru af silki, en ístigin sjálf váru af rauða gulli ok sylgjurnar. (chapter X, 10, ms. AM 575a 4to)

The helmet, the bit and the reins were all made of fine Spanish gold: "En hǫfuðleðr beizlsins var af gulli ok sett dýrum steinum; en sjálft beizlit var af spænzku gulli" (chapter X, 11, ms. AM 575a 4to). The goldwork itself was worth more than the precious stones from the helmet, which were themselves worth a fortune, as the French author underlines: "et sacez meuz en vaut l'ufraigne/ que l'or ne les peres ne funt,/ que tutes precioses sunt." (vss. 743-746, ms. V). The Old Norse manuscript AM 575a 4to writes that all of this was worth ten towns: "En allt saman var þat virt fyrir X kastala" (chapter X, 12), while manuscript AM 489 4to omits the elaborate description above and only mentions that the horse was worth six towns: "en hestrinn kostaði vj góða kastala" (chapter 7).

Floire's mother gave him a golden ring to protect him, but which was also a symbol of his royal descent. Both the romance (all manuscripts, apart from ms. A) and the saga (both manuscripts) give the same description of the ring's magic powers:

"– Filz, fait ele, cest guardez ben;
tant cum l'avrez, mar crendrez ren:
fer ne vus pot entamer,
ne fou ardeir, ne ewe naer.
"Filz, cest anel ad grant puissance,
si en poez avoir fiance
que vus ja rien ne querriez
que tost u tart tut ne l'aiez." (vss. 753-

"Son minn", segir hon, "varðveit þetta vel, þvíat þú þarft ekki at hræðaz, meðan þú hefir þetta gull, hvárki eld né járn, ok eigi vǫtn; ok þat hefir þann mátt í steininum, at hvers sem þú leitar, þá muntu finna, hvárt sem þat er fyrr eðr síðarr." (chapter X, 14, AM 575a 4to).

"My son", she said, "keep it safe, because as long as you wear it, you have nothing to fear: no iron (sword) will hurt you, no fire burn you, and no water drown you."
"My son, this ring (ringstone OF) has great powers, and you

[33] The Old Norse edition of the quoted manuscript identifies the fabric as Wendish (Slavonic).

760, ms. V)

can be sure that, sooner or later, you will find everything you are looking for."

In the French romance, Floire answers: "[...] uncore l'avrat s'amie!" (One day his love will wear it, vs. 762, ms. V). In the saga, Floire only thanks his mother and gets ready to leave.

The departure scene, which describes the sorrow they all experience in such a moment, is kept in the Old Norse manuscript AM 575a 4to, but not in AM 489 4to:

Atant lur demande cungé. Li reis li ad plurant duné. A sa mere rad congé pris. Ele plure et dit:-"Mis chers amis, A Deu vus seiez cumandé!" Prist l'en, si l'ad seit feiz beisé et fesist plus s'en fust aise. Li reis li tout, treis feiz le beise. La les verrez amdous plurer, Tortre les puinz, lur crins tirer, Et tel dol faire al partir Cume s'i le veissent idunc murir, [...] (vss. 763-774, ms. V)	When this was said, he asked his father for permission to leave. His father gave him permission, while crying. Then he bade his mother farewell. She cried and said:-"My dear friend, may God protect you!" She prayed and kissed him seven times, and she would have kissed him more if they had been at ease. The king kisses him three times. If you had only seen them both cry, wring their hands and tear out their hair. They carried out such a mourning as if they saw him dying.	[...] en síðan tók hann leyfi af konungi ok dróttningu; en þau kystu hann grátandi, ok tóku síðan at reyta hár sitt, ok bǫrðu sik ok létu, sem aldri mundu þau hann sjá síðan, ok um þat váru þau sannspá; en þá bað Flóres þau vel lifa. (chapter X, 15, AM 575a 4to)	Then he took his leave of the king and the queen who kissed him and cried and tore out their hair and beard, and it looked as if they would never see him again, prophecy they were right about. Then, Flóres wished them (to live) well.

Floire and his men's first stop was in the port where Blancheflor had been sold. There they were hosted by a rich man. They all called themselves merchants, and called Floire their lord: "Marchant dient qu'il sunt" (vs. 801, ms. V) and "Floires dient qu'est lur seingnur" (vs. 803, ms. V)/ "Flóres sǫgðu þeir at væri þeira lávarðr" (chapter X, 17, ms. AM 575a 4to). This is the first moment when Floire's sadness and his striking resemblance to Blancheflor lead him, like a red thread, a step closer to find her:

Floire a Blancheflur ad sun talent, pur le bon vin pas ne l'ublie, mult prise poi senz li sa vie. Pur li suvent s'entre ubliot et parfundement suspirot (vss. 824-828, ms. V)	Flores thought only of Blancheflor. He could not forget her, in spite of the good wine. Without her, his life was worth nothing. Because of her he often forgot himself and sighed deeply.	Þá var Flóres óglaðr, fyrir því at þá kom honum í hug Blankiflúr, ok andvarpaði iðuliga. (chapter X, 19, ms. AM 575a 4to)	Flores was unhappy, because he came to think of Blancheflor. He sighed constantly.

This time, the hostess remembers that Blancheflor also spent some time there before she was taken by her buyers to Babylon:[34]

”[...] Autel vi jo l’autre jur de damoisele Blancheflur – eissi se numa ele a mai. Ele te resemble, par ma fai! Bien poez estre d’un aage. Vus resemblez de visage. Ensement al manger pensot et un sun ami regretout, Floire, qui amie ele asteit, pur qui tolir l’um la vendeit. (vss. 845-854) [...] Cil chi l’acaterent diseient qu’en Babilonie la merreient, a l’amirall tant la vendreient que a duble i guanereient” (vss. 855-858, ms. V)	A similar (behaviour) I noticed the other day in a maiden, Blancheflur- that’s what her name was (she told me). She resembles you, my faith! You may well be the same age. Your faces are alike. Like you, she was thoughtful at dinner and she longed for her sweetheart, Floire, whose sweetheart she was, and so to separate them she was sold. Those who had bought her said they would take her to Babylon; they were hoping to sell her to the emir and get double the price.	Ok þá mælti hon við Flóres: ”Herra”, segir hon, ”íhugafullr ertu mjǫk, er þú etr eigi né drekkr, ok yfrit andvarpar þú; ok slíkt sá ek í sinn á meyjunni, er Blankiflúr nefndiz, ok þér mjǫk lík í andliti, ok át aldri né drakk, ok harmaði unnasta sinn, en Flóres nefndi hon hann, ok fyrir hans sakir kvaz ho seld vera. En kaupmenn keyptu hana ok fluttu til Babilóniam ok seldu konunginum.” (chapter X, 20, ms. AM 575a 4to)	And then she told Floire: ”Sir,” she says, ”you are very thoughtful, you neither eat nor drink, and you sigh deeply; I have recently seen the same in a young lady, Blankiflúr by name, who had a face very much like yours, and she never ate or drank, and she grieved for her sweetheart whom she called Flóres. For his sake she was sold. Some merchants bought her and took her to Babylon and sold her to the king.

Before heading for Babylon, Floire and his men find lodgings with a notable ship-owner and merchant. Once again, Floire’s lovesickness and longing for Blancheflor confirms their likeness in matters of both aspect and behaviour. His host remembers Blancheflor who grieved in the same manner, he gives him advice and leads him another step of the way. The French romance elaborates this episode. After telling the reader that the ship owned by the host was used to carry Blancheflor, the author adds: ”Par lui, ço quit, reorra nuvelle/Floires iloc de la pulcele” (Through him, I suppose, Floire will receive news about the maiden ”vss. 975-976, ms. V). The Old Norse saga, on the other hand, shortens the episode to one sentence describing Floire’s grief and lack of appetite and to the dialogue between Floire and his host. As was the case with his previous host, Floire does not hesitate to show his joy when he hears of his sweetheart. During the night he can hardly sleep. This is how the romance and the saga express his lack of sleep:

[34] There are six extra lines in manuscript A which reveal how long Blancheflor stayed in the port before she was sold, namely 15 days. The lines are left out both in manuscript V and in the saga.

Quant Floires dort, sun quor veille; od Blancheflur giue et cunseille, meis sun dormir ere mult petit. Al matin, quant le jur vit, ses cumpaingnuns ad asveillez. Quant il se sunt aparaillez, al dreit chemin sunt alé vers Babilonie la cité. (vss. 1035-1042, ms. V)	When Floire sleeps, and his heart is awake, he jokes with and talks to Blancheflor, but he did not get much sleep. Next morning,when he saw the light, he woke up his companions. When they were ready to depart, they took the direct road to the city of Babylon.	”En er þeir váru mettir, fóru þeir at sofa; svaf Flóres lítit þá nótt, ok er dagr kom, vakði hann upp menn sína ok bað þá búaz skyndiliga. (chapter XIII, 6, ms. AM 575a 4to)	And when they had eaten their fill, they went to bed; Flóres slept little that night, and when day came, he woke up his men and asked them to get ready promptly.

The ferryman noticed that Floire was a nobleman and, once again, when asked whether he could host Floire and his men for the night, the ferryman remembered that Blancheflor had travelled the same way and that she had been taken to Babylon where the emir had bought her:

”[...] Voluntiers vus i herbegerrai. Mais, fait il, baus sire, pur ço le diseie que murne et pensif vus veie. Tut ensement vi jo uan, entur la feste seint Johan, ceinz une pulcele entrer et tut ensement fort plurer. Mais mult, fait il, la resemblez, sun frere estre bien purriez.” (vss. 1080-1086, ms. V)	I will be glad to host you. But, he said, dear sir, the reason I asked was that I see you sad and thoughtful. In quite the same manner I saw once before, around the feast of St. John, a maid enter here, and weep in quite the same manner.[35] You look a lot like her, he said, you could well be her brother.	Farhirðir svarar: ”Því spurða ek yðr slíks, at hér var mey ein fyrir skǫmmu; var hon þér mjǫk lík ok mjǫk sorgfull; syrgði hon sinn unnasta ok nefndi hann Flóres”. (chapter XIV, 5, ms. AM 575a 4to)	The ferryman answered: ”That’s why I asked you this, because a maid was here a short time ago; she was very much like you and very sorrowful; she grieved for her sweetheart, and she called him Flóres.

The next morning, Floire paid the ferryman one hundred shillings and asked him to recommend him a friend in Babylon, and at the same time to give him a sign of this friendship:

L’endemain, quant il prent cungé, a sun ost cent souz duna. En aprés mult li preia que si en Babilonie oüst ami ki aider li poüst, ke par enseignes lui mandast qu’a sun busuing le cunseillast. (vss. 1096-1102, ms. V)	The following day, when he took his leave, Floire gave his host a hundred shilling. Afterwards he asked him earnestly that, if he had a friend in Babylon that could help him,	En um morgininn, er þeir fóru í brott, gaf hann farhirði C skillinga ok bað hann vísa sér til vinar síns nǫkkurs í Babilón, með sínum jartegnum. (chapter XIV, 7, ms. AM 575a 4to)	And in the morning, when they should go, he gave the ferryman one hundred shillings and asked him to show him the way to one of his friends in Babylon, and to send a sign with him.

[35] The French manuscripts A and B write that Blancheflor had been there approximately half a year earlier: ”n’a mie encore demi an” (vs. 1534, ms. A) and ”n’a pas encore demi an” (vs. 1352, ms. B).

	that he would send this friend a token, so that he would counsel Floire, if need be.

The likeness between Floire and Blancheflor is emphasized once again, here through the houselady, Licoris (OF)/ Lidernis (ON):

–”Sire, fait Licoris, par foi, çou m’est avis, quant jou le voi, que çou soit Blanceflor la bele. Jou cuit qu’ele est sa suer jumele: tel vis, tel cors et tel sanlant com ele avoit a cest enfant. [...] Floire, un sien ami, regretoit et nuit et jor por lui ploroit.” (vss. 1725-1730, 1735-1736, ms. A 1980)[36]	”Sir, Licoris said, by my faith, my opinion is that, when I see him, it would be the beautiful Blancheflor. I believe she is his twin sister: such face, such body and such resemblance with her I see in this child. [...] She grieved for Floire, a friend of hers, and day and night she cried for him.	”Næsta sýniz mér, sem ek sjá Blankiflúr hvert sinn, er ek sé þenna mann, ok ek hygg, at hann sé bróðir hennar, fyrir því at hann hefir slíkan lit ok slík læti, sem hon hafði. [...] ok hon grét bæði dag ok nótt, ok harmaði unnastu sinn, ok nefndi hann Flóres.” (chapter XV, 14, ms. AM 575a 4to).	”It seems to me that I almost see Blankiflúr every time I see this man, and I believe that he is her brother because he has such face tone and such likeness as she had. [...] and she cried both day and night, and she grieved over her sweetheart and called him Flóres.”

When Flóres heard such words, he fainted: ”þá fell hann í óvit” (chapter XV, 15, ms. AM 575a 4to). The French manuscripts A and B mention only that Floire was surprised: ”Quant Flo(i)res l’ot, si s’esbahi (vs. 1740, ms. A, vs. 1556, ms. B). This remark is only suppositional, since manuscript V is lost, and we don’t know if this line was there or not. The Old Norse manuscript AM 489 4to has a lacuna in this place.

When Gloris (Claris) enters the room of Blancheflor, we have the same picture of a grief-stricken Blancheflor whom, we are told, cried for her sweetheart, Floire, both day and night: ”en son ami a mis s’entente, por lui est nuit et jor dolente. (vss. 2367-2368, ms. A, vss. 2160-2161, ms. B). The saga ignores this aspect and continues with a dialogue between Blankiflúr and Elóris. In this dialogue, the Norse saga reveals Blankiflúr’s doubt about Flóres betraying her love. The feeling expressed in the French romance is strong, honest love:

Li amiranz med doit avoir, si con l’en dit et je espoir, mes, se Diex plest, ja ne m’avra	The emir wants to have me, they say, and I hope, God willing, that he will not. Neither	”[...] þvíat mér er sagt, at konungr vili nú hafa mik at konu; en ef guð vill, þá skal mér aldri	[...] because I was told that the king wants me to be his wife now. But, God willing, I will never

[36] This dialogue appears also in manuscript B.

ne reprouchié ne me sera que par destroit d'autrui amour lest le biau Floire Blancheflor. Pour seue amor engin qurré que aparmain je m'ocirré. (vss. 2184-2191, ms. B)	will I be reproached that, for another love, Blancheflor left Floire, the (her) sweetheart. For his love I will search a way to kill myself (by my own hand).	verða því brugðit, at ek skula vera ástar svikari, svá sem Flóres gerði við mik: skal ek fyrir hans sakir drepa mik sjálf." (chapter XIX, 3, AM 575a 4to).	be reproached that I shall be a love-betrayer, like Flóres was to me: for his sake, I will kill myself.

In the meantime, Floire/ Flóres jumps out of the basket when he recognizes Blancheflor's/ Blankiflúr's voice. The romance gives a more elaborate description of the sweetheart's encounter, while the saga only gives a resumé:

Sus s'entrekeurent sans parler, grant joie font a l'assambler. De grant pitié, de grant amor, pleure Flores et Blanceflor. De ses bras li uns l'autre lie et en baisier cascuns s'oublie. El baisier a une loee qu'il font a une reposee. Lor baisiers est de grant douçor; forment les asseüre amor. Quant se baisent, nul mot ne dient, ains s'entresgardent, si sosrient. (vss. 2413-2424, ms. A)[37]	They reached for each another without a word, and there is great joy when they are reunited. With tenderness and with great love, Flores and Blancheflor cry. They hug each other and they forget about each other in a long kiss. The kiss lasts long and is given with one breath. Their kiss is of great sweetness; love supports them greatly. When they kiss, they say no word, while they look at each other they smile.	En er Flóres heyrði þetta, þá hljóp hann upp or laupinum, ok þegar, sem þau sáz, þá mintuz þau við ok fǫðmuðuz langa hríð. (chapter XIX, 5, AM 575a 4to)	But when Flóres heard that, he jumped out of the basket, and as soon as they saw each other, they held and kissed each other for a long time.

The lovers are finally reunited. Blancheflor takes Floire to her room and her bed covered in silk. The conversation between them is shortened in the saga. In the romance, there is a more elaborate dialogue in which the lovers express their feelings:

–"Amie, fait il, molt sui lié. Molt ai bien ma paine akievee quant jou ensi vos ai trovee. Por vos ai esté de mort prés et de travail soffert grant fés. Onques, puis que perdu vos oi, joie ne repos ainc puis n'oi, Quant je vos ai a mon talent, il m'est avis nul mal ne sent." Ele respont:-"Estes vos Floire, qui fu envoiés a Montoire, a cui me toli par envie li rois ses pere o trecerie?	"Sweetheart, he says, I am very happy. My pain has achieved a lot, as I find you here. For you I have been close to death, and I have carried the heavy burden of torments. Since I lost you, I could not have rest or joy. When I have you, it is a comfort, sweetheart, and it seems I feel no pain."	"Sæll þykkjumz ek,"sagði Flóres, "at ek hefi þik fundit, þvíat aldri beið ek ró, síðan ek mista þín." "Hversu komtu hingat?" sagði hon. En hann sagði henni. (chapter XIX, 8, AM 575a 4to).	"I am happy," said Flóres,"that I have found you, because I never found peace since I lost you." "How did you come here?" she said. And he told her.

[37] Manuscript B does not have vss. 2413-2414 and vss. 2419-2429 from the quoted A manuscript. B has different verses for: Leur besier iert de douce amor,/ moult l'asaveurent par douçour. (Their kiss is of sweet love; they season it greatly with sweetness-vss. 2212-2213) and Quant le leissent, molt ne se dient (When they stop (kissing), they don't say much vs. 2214).

[38] Manuscript B is similar.

Biaus dous amis, je vos fac sage que je vos aim de boin corage. Ainc puis n'oi joie ne deduit, saciés, ne par jor par nuit. Comment venistes vos çaiens? Çou cuit que soit encantemens. Biaus amis Flores, je vos voi et neporquant si vos mescroi! Mais, amis, qui que vos soiés, forment vos aim, ça vos traiés!" (vss. 2458-2480, ms. A)[38]	She answers: "Are you Floire who was sent to Montoire, whose father, the king, had me carried away, by hatred or by tricks?[39] Sweetheart, I declare that I love you sincerely. Since then I had no joy, you know, neither by night nor by day. How did you come here? I believe it is (by) magic. Sweetheart Flores, I see you and still, I cannot believe my eyes! But, sweetheart, no matter who you are, I love you immensely. Come (closer) to me!

Their love is kept secret, Eloris promises not to tell anyone and she serves them food for half a month while they eat, drink and sleep together. The amount of days they stay together before the emir finds them is given by manuscript B only: "Quinze jours entiers ilec furent" (Fifteen full days they were here – vs. 2280, ms. B)/ "Váru þau hálfan mánað saman" (They were together half a month-chapter XIX, 9, AM 575a 4to).

When it was Gloris/ Elóris and Blancheflor's/ Blankiflúr's turn to attend the king one morning, and Blancheflor fell asleep again, Gloris/ Elóris made up an excuse and told the king that she had been up all night and kept a vigil for him by singing from her book. The same attempt was made the next morning, but this time, Floire/ Flóres and Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr were discovered lying together in the same bed. The emir sent one of his attendants to Blancheflor's/ Blankiflur's room, and the attendant thought it was Gloris/ Elóris and Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr who slept together:

vis li est qu'il i a veü Blanceflor et bele Gloris. Por coi ne li fust il avis? K'a face n'a menton n'avoit barbe, ne grenons n'i paroit. En la tor n'avoit damoisele qui de visage fust plus bele. (vss. 2582-2587, ms. A)	It seemed to him that he saw Blancheflor and beautiful Gloris. And why should not that seem so? On his face he had no beard, and he seemed to have no moustache. In the tower there was no maid with a more beautiful face.	ok hugði hann, at Elóris mundi vera, þvíat Flóres hafði eigi skegg; váru fár meyjar fríðari. (chapter XX, 9, AM 575a 4to).	And he thought that it must be Elóris, because Flóres did not have beard; few maids were more beautiful.

[39] In the French romance, Blancheflor holds Floire's father, the king, responsible for her being carried away. She expresses no doubt that Floire might have betrayed her, as she does earlier in the saga.

The description of Floire and Blancheflor lying together in bed is not omitted in the saga. It seems to be described as detailed as in the romance:

–"Sire, merveilles ai veü! Ainc mais si grans amors ne fu com a Blanceflor vers Gloris et ele a li, ce m'est avis. Ensanle dorment doucement, acolé sont estroitement; bouce a boucë et face a face sont acolé, et brace a brace. (vss. 2593-2600, ms. A)	"Sir, I have seen an amazing thing! Never before was there such great love as Blancheflor shows Gloris, and she her, I believe. Together they sleep sweetly, tightly holding each other; mouth to mouth and face to face, they are holding each other.	"Ek sá varla jafnmikla ást, sem þær hafa, Blankiflúr ok Elóris; þær sofa svá sœtliga, at munnar þeira lágu saman, ok eigi vilda ek vekja þær." (id.)	I have never (hardly) seen similar love as they have (share): Blankiflúr and Elóris. They sleep so sweetly, that their mounths lie against each other, and I did not want to wake them up.

When the emir goes to see for himself, the same likeness strikes him. Floire's young age, expressed through his lack of beard and his unique beauty, is once again confirmed:

en son vis nul sanlant n'avoit qu'il fust hom, car a son menton n'avoit ne barbe ne grenon; fors Blanceflor n'avoit tant bele an la tor nule damoisele. (vss. 2638-2642, ms. A, 2431-2435, ms. B)	On his face nothing could reveal he was a man, because he had no beard and no moustache; apart from Blanceflor there was no such beautiful maid in the tower.	Vissi konungr varla, hvárt mær lá hjá Blankiflúr eða karlmaðr, sakir þess at hann hafði ekki skegg; enda var hann nóg fagr; (chapter XX, 12, AM 575a 4to).	The king hardly knew, whether it was a maid who lay with Blankiflúr or a man. This was because he had no beard. Besides, he was quite beautiful.

6.4. The use of *courtly love* symbols, rhetorical devices and allegories in the romance and their ommission or adaptation in the saga

Floire is forced to leave for Montoire (OF)/ Mintorie (ON), to Sebile (OF)/ Sibila (ON), the sister of Floire/ Flóres' mother.[40] The reason was not studying, as implied, but keeping him away from Blancheflor and hopefully finding a new love. Floire's father expressed his concern for the growing love between the two children and feared that Floire might dishonour the whole family by marrying Blancheflor and not a woman of royal descent. Although he is welcomed with great honour and joy by Sibila and her husband, earl Goias (OF ms. V)/ Goneas (ON), Floire is sad and misses Blancheflor. Although Sibila arranged for him to meet other maids at school, he could not get Blancheflor out of his mind. Floire's longing after Blancheflor is a form of lovesickness and it appears in both the romance and

[40] There are different names for the town Montoire/Mintorie. Manuscript AM 489 4to uses the name Mustorie. The Spanish Chronicle mentions Montor, while Patricia Grieve identifies this town with Montoro in Andalusia (Grieve 1997).

the saga, although it is expressed differently. The saga uses the dream instead of the allegory of the tree that Amor (the god of Love) planted in Floire's heart:

Amur li ad livré entente, al quor li ad planté un ente ki en tuz tens flurie esteit et tant dulcement li uleit que ne encenzs ne zodoal ne girofre ne galengal. Icel odor rien ne preissout, tut autre joie ubliout: le fruit de cel ente entendeit, meis li terme mult lung asteit, ço li ert vis, del fruit quillir, quant Blancheflur verrat gesir juste sai et la beiserat, lu fruit de l'ente dunc cuildrat. (vss. 211-224 ms. V 1980).	Amor aimed at him and planted into his heart a graft everlastingly in bloom and sweeter-smelling than incense, zedoary, clove and galingale. But Floire did not enjoy that sweetness of smell; and he ignored any other joy: he waited only for the fruit of the graft; but it seemed too long until the day he would pick the fruit, until he would see Blancheflor lie close to him and accept his kisses, thus picking the fruit of the graft.	Þá eina huggan hafði hann, er honum kom í hug Blankiflúr; en þat þótti honum sœtara en nǫkkurr ilmr. Um nætr dreymdi hann, at hann þóttiz kyssa Blankiflúr; en þá er hann vaknaði, þá misti hann hennar. En með slíkum harmi beið hann eindagans; en þá sá hann, at hann var gabbaðr, er hon kom eigi, ok hræddiz hann þá, at hon mundi vera dauð, ok mátti hann þá hvárki eta né drekka, sofa né sitja, útan grátandi, ok óttaðiz hann, herbergissveinninn, at hann mundi týnaz, ok sendi konungi orð. En hann varð mjǫk hryggr, er hann spurði þat, ok gaf honum leyfi til heim at fara; (chapter VI, 5-8).	He had only one comfort, when he thought of Blankiflúr; and this, he thought, was sweeter than any smell. During the nights he dreamt of kissing Blankiflúr, but when he woke up, he lost sight of her. With such grief he waited for the day (the fifteenth day); but then he noticed he had been fooled, as she did not come, and he feared she must have been dead. He could then neither eat nor drink, sleep or sit without crying. The chamberlain (who had been sent along by the king) feared he would die and sent word to the king. The news brought him (the king) to grief and gave Floire permission to come home.

The graft is the symbol of Blancheflor, and picking the fruit is a symbol of sexual intercourse. This is Floire's first test, the first important step in the hero's *courtly love* initiation. Floire loves from a distance, he loves Blancheflor in her absence (Leclanche 2003: 23). This allegory – Amor planting a tree in Floire's heart – is absent from the saga. The whole passage is adapted to a dream. Yet, as suggested above by Sävborg, the love portrayal is not completely omitted in the *riddarasögur*. In this case even the word *kyssa* is present. We don't have the same ambiguity as in the French romance, i.e. kiss/ sexual intercourse, but a precise verb, to kiss. It is not possible to sense the allusion to a possible sexual intercourse, as an important act of the courtly initiation, but it is possible to sense Flóres' love, which is expressed in a typical saga-manner: description of his grief and the lack of joy, appetite and sleep.

The king speculates upon the power that keeps the love between Floire and Blancheflor growing, and he accuses Blancheflor of witchcraft. Once again he wants to kill her, something he meant should have been done for a long time, but the queen advises him to sell her to Babylon. Leclanche believes that the port where Blancheflor is sold is Almeria, gate of the East, where also Floire would later embark for Baudas (Alexandria), the port of

Babylon (Cairo).[41] In the second version, the so-called 'roman', Floire's father is from Almeria, not from Naples (Leclanche 2003: 25). Many merchants would want to buy her for her beauty and knowledge, and, indeed, she was sold for an enormous price: thirty gold and twenty silver marks, twenty silks from Benevento, ten variegated oriental purple cloaks, ten indigo tunics, and one precious golden cup that had been stolen from the treasury of the rich Roman emperor: "trente mars d'or et vint de argent/ et .XX. palies de Bonevent,/ et dis mantauls veirs osterins,/ et dis bliaus inde purprins,/ et une chere cupe de fin or/ ki fu emblé del tresor/ al riche empereür de Rume [...]" (vss. 307-313, ms. V). The saga mentions only the cup's origin, but does not reveal, as in the French romance, that it had been stolen from the great treasure of the mighty Roman Emperor, that is Cæsar – as it is mentioned later in the romance. Both the romance and the saga give a long and elaborate description – 70 romance lines – of the priceless golden goblet with engravings of Paris carrying Helen away, the Trojan War and Agamemnon with his fleet at sea. The allegory represented by the goddesses Venus (Afrodite), Pallas Athene (Minerva) and Juno (Hera) is preserved in the saga, as well. The episode engraved on the lid of the cup portrays how the goddesses quarrelled because of a fine golden apple on which it was inscribed that the most beautiful of them could keep it. They asked Paris to judge which one was worthy of the golden apple. They promise Paris something in return, and these promises are the expression of their own representation in the system of Roman and Greek deities. Juno, the goddess of marriage and women and protector of the people of Rome, promises him wealth and abundance, Pallas Athene, or Minerva in Roman mythology, promises him courage and wisdom, while Venus, representing love and beauty, promises him the most beautiful woman, the gem that outshone all the others. The allusion to Paris' choice, i.e. of the beautiful Helen, despite all wisdom, courage or wealth underlines Floire's intention to cross the sea in search of his own love, Blancheflor. The fact that the golden cup is given in return for Blancheflor situates this love story in a historical context: from its maker in Troy, Vulcan(s) (OF)/Ullius (ON, ms. AM 489 4to)/Malter (ON, ms. AM 575a 4to) the cup was taken by King Eneas to his lover, Lavinia, in Lombardy. Afterwards, the cup belonged to all emperors of Rome, until a thief stole it from Cæsar and sold it to a merchant who gave it in return for Blancheflor. As we will see, the track of the cup does not end here, but it is, so to speak, a witness of love stories and great events. Another interpretation of this track, belonging to Sharon Kinoshita, is that the goblet represents the first stage of the westward migration of power, interrupted,

[41] In 1966, Charles François identified the romance's description of 'Baudas' and 'Babylon (Cairo)' as allusions to Alexandria and Cairo, respectively. (Charles François, 'Floire et Blancheflor': du chemin de Compostelle au chemin de la Mecque, in Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire, 44 (1966), 833-58).

however, by two details: the reverse chronological order in which the scenes are depicted and the return of the goblet, from the hands of the Babylonian merchants back to 'pagan' Spain instead of Latin Europe, that is to France, as in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*, for instance. The material history of the goblet is also linked to the thematics of *translatio* (Kinoshita 2003: 229).

The king believed it would help Floire forget Blancheflor if they staged her mock death and built a monument in her memory. The saga only refers to the tomb in one sentence: "Þá lét konungr gera steinþró, ok lét ríta þetta á: Hér liggr undir en fagra Blankifúr, sú er Flóres unni vel" (chapter VII, 13, ms. AM 575a 4to – Then, the king made a stone vault and had the following epitaph written on it: Beneath this stone lies the beautiful Blankiflúr, whom Flóres loved greatly). Leclanche (2003: 31) makes an interesting note on the corresponding four verses in Old French, which only manuscript V contains: "Et li reis fait aparailler/ une ‹riche› tumbe al muster,/ et desus une pere mist/ en qui un epitaffe escrist:..." (the same translation as above).[42] These four verses replace the short dialogue in which the queen advised the king to build the monument, i.e verses 523-550 in manuscript A, vss. 518-537 in B. In this dialogue, 20 verses, the queen also expressed her concern for how Floire was going to receive the news. She feared he might kill himself for love, but believed they could comfort him. The rest of the verses, up to vs. 664 in ms. A and vs. 652 in ms. B portray the monument, but for space reasons I choose to quote only the relevant verses out of the 115 ones. Manuscript V does not include the elaborate account of the tomb, either. The highly rhetorical language typical of the *romans d'antiquité* is used in the description of Blancheflor's tomb. The best masons and goldsmiths were asked to build the most beautiful monument a mortal being had ever seen. The tomb was marvellously decorated in gold and silver, and all the birds, fish, domestic and wild animals and reptiles of the world are represented, which, Leclanche notes, resemble the taxonomy in Genesis I: 26 (Leclanche 2003: 33). The marble tomb was placed in front of a chapel and beneath a tree, and it sparkled in the sun. The enamels encased in crystal were also crimped in gold and silver. Above the tomb they placed the statues of two beautiful children, casted in perfect moulds: "Desor la tombe ot tresjetés/ .II. biax enfans tres bien mollés" (vss. 573-574, ms. A 1980). No one had seen two more beautiful children. One of them resembled Floire: "Li uns des .II. Flore sanloit" (vs. 577, ms. A). The other statue was moulded as the effigy of Blancheflor: "L'autre ymage ert ensi mollee/ comme Blanceflor ert formee" (vss.

[42] Leclanche believes these verses (the sentence in the saga) must surely come from the original manuscript. The word ‹riche› was added by Leclanche cf. Saga, ms. N, AM 489 4to: *rikuliga*. *Muster* (*mostier, moutier*) (OF) is a church or a pagan temple. This could have belonged to a Christian or a pagan prelate. The western part of the world did not ignore that important Christian communities arose in Egypt and the East, in general.

579-580, ms. A). The statues were holding a flower each: Blancheflor held out a fresh rose in fine gold for her friend, and Floire held out his hand to offer Blancheflor a lily: ”devant Flore tint une flor./ Devant son ami tint la bele/ une rose d’or fin novele./ Flores li tint devant son vis/ d’or une gente flor de lis.” (vss. 582-586, ms. A). The two children were placed graciously side-by-side. In the four corners of the tomb the master builders beautifully arranged four pipes in which the four winds could engulf, each in its own pipe. When the wind reached the children they started to embrace and exchanged kisses and, as an act of magic, also tender words of love. Floire told Blancheflor: Kiss me, my beauty, for love. Blancheflor kissed him and answered: I love you more than anything in the world: ”Ce dist Flores a Blanceflor: -“Basiés moi, bele, par amor.” Blanceflor respont en baisant: -”Je vos aim plus que riens vivant.” (vss. 601-604, ms. A).[43] At the one end of the tomb they planted a beautiful shrub which was perpetually in bloom: ”Au cief desus de cel tomblel/ avoit planté un arbrisel;/ molt estoit biax et bien foillis/ et de flors ert assés garnis; (vss. 609-612, ms. A). This shrub, an ebony, had the quality of never catching fire, whereas the red terebinth tree planted at the foot of the tomb, on the side where the sun rises, was more beautiful than a rose tree in bloom. There was a chrism tree to the right of the tomb and a balsam tree to its left.[44] The planting of the chrism and the balsam tree together is, in my opinion, symbolic of an anointing sacrament. Those who planted these trees invoked all gods, and they cast a spell on all plants so they would be eternally in flower: ”que toustans cil arbre florirent” (vs. 630, ms. A) These shrubs bear plenty of flowers and thousands of birds sing there, endlessly: ”Bien sont flouri cil arbrisel,/ tous tans i cantent .M. oisel.” (vss. 631-632, ms. A). The statuary group together with the trees in flower, their odour and the magnificent bird songs create the perfect scenary in which two lovers would embrace and kiss tenderly. If any people, indifferent to love, came to listen to these songs, they would immediately fall asleep at the sweetness of this warbling: ”Se nule gens les escoutaissent/ qui ja d’amor ne se penaissent,/ de la douçor que il oïssent/ isnellepas s’en endormissent.” (vss. 643-646, ms. A).

That tomb was placed between four trees: ”Entre .IIII. arbres se gisoit/cele tombe qui faite estoit.” (vss. 647-648, ms. A). Once again, these elements: the garden, the tree and the monument are missing from the saga. Building such a marvellous tombs for young women seemed to be unusual, as we understand from the romance: ”Onques mais por une pucele/

[43] The word *bele* is the equivalent of *my dear*, but it would be too trivial to use it in this context (Leclanche 2003: 35).
[44] Chrism tree is my translation of *cresmier* (OF). In Modern French, *chrême* means consecrated oil, normally olive oil mingled with balm and used for sacramental or ceremonial anointing in Catholic and Orthodox churches. Chrism tree seems to be a fantasy tree whose flowers drip oil.

ne cuit que fust faite tant bele." (vss. 649-650, ms. A). This was not common in Norway either. That can explain why the whole description of the monument was reduced.

Both the legend of Troy, engraved on the goblet, and Blancheflor's cenotaph point towards the literary-historical world of the *romans d'antiquité*.

The delicate niello: 'par menue neeleüre' (vs. 449, ms. A),'d'or et d'argent iert neelee' (vs. 543, ms. B) and "Toute ert la tombe neelee,/ de l'or d'Arrabe bien letree." (vss. 661-662, ms. A) which adorned both the goblet and the tomb is witness of the medieval Mediterranean tradition. The inlay technique of niello was known from the antiquity, and in the eleventh and twelfth centuries niello was strongly associated with Fatimid Egypt and al-Andalus. Fatimid and Andalusian niellowork were linked by their simplicity of decoration, decorative motifs and method of execution. References to niello also appear in the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne and the Charroi de Nîmes, two epics that treat Latin Europe's contact with Byzantine Greece and the Muslim south, respectively (Kinoshita 2003: 229).

Although briefly recounted in four paragraphs, the main ideas in the French pair-couplets, i. e. the indescribable beauty of Blancheflor and the injustice and cruelty of Death, are also included in the saga.[45] These pair-couplets addressing Death are completely omitted in the saga, though:

"Ces ki plus te heent aimes,
e ultre lur voill les en meines.
Ne se pot defendre saveir
de tei, pruez ne aveir." (vss. 504-507, ms. V)

Those who hate you are your favourite
and you take them where they don't want to go;
neither Wisdom, nor Courage, nor Wealth
can defend themselves from you.

"Quant aucun dolurus t'apele,
dunc turnez bien ta ruele.
Tu vouz aver regrez et preicz,
idunt te cheent ben tes dez." (vss. 524-527, ms. V)

When an unfortunate calls you,
then, your wheel spins in your favour;
you love complaints and humble prayers,
well then, your dice show six face up.[46]

These pair-couplets point allegorically to representations of gods and goddesses: Pallas Athene/ Minerva (goddess of wisdom and courage), Juno (protector of Rome, symbolizing Wealth) and Fortuna (Roman goddess of good fortune and happiness). Both pair-couplets, the first one through an enumeration of goddesses, and the second one through a crossing of two allegories, death and fortune, emphasize the same idea of inevitability. Such allegories are part of the rhetorical language of the *romans d'antiquité*. Their absence from the saga is therefore no surprise. One metaphor which is kept in the saga is the 'champ fluri'/

[45] For space reasons I quote only the pair-couplets addressing death that are most relevant in my discussion. The quotations are taken from the 2003 edition of manuscript A. In a note, Leclanche remarks that manuscripts AB have an additional pair-couplet which interrupts the logic of ideas and affects the organization of the planctus. By taking out the additional pair-couplet, the variant in the 2003 edition is actually the same as in manuscript V.

[46] The wheel (of Fortune) and the dice, elements of chance, are used allegorically.

’Blómstrvallar’. The transfer into the Field of Flowers is an allusion to Floire’s suicide attempt, and it is expressed similarly in both the romance and the saga. The author of the saga is clearly introducing a new concept, since he finds it necessary to explain it to his readers/ listeners. This is another case of author’s intervention:

”Nú skal ek fara til Blómstrvallar, þvíat þar bíðr mín Blankiflúr, mín unnasta.” Þat kǫlluðu heiðnir menn Paradís eða Blómstrarvǫll, er æ stendr með blóma. (chapter VIII, 12, ms. AM 575a 4to).

”Now I shall go to the Field of Flowers, because my beloved Blancheflor is waiting for me there.” That’s what heathen people called Paradise or Field of Flowers which are always in bloom.

Lovesickness, grief at the loss of the beloved one, as well as suicide attempts are all typical expressions of *courtly love*. The fact that the authors used different techniques in expressing it, namely pair-couplets and allegories in the romance, and monologues in the saga must be seen against the respective literary traditions and cultures.

Only manuscript A gives an elaborate account of various fantastic methods the king and the queen try to find in order to comfort Floire (vss. 793-997, ms. A). Leclanche entitles the passage which is only present in manuscript A: *The game* (*magic*) *of Barbarin and Floire’s suicide attempt in the lions’ pit*. The passage seems to be the intervention of the French author who addresses an audience of men:

Signor, molt se dementoit Floire. Des puis qu’il revint de Montoire ne fu liés par nuit ne par jour. Sa vie est molt en grant dolour. [...] (vss. 793-796, ms A 1980)	Sirs, Floire was in despair. Since his return from Montoire, he was never cheerful again, neither by night, nor by day. He lives his life in agony.

Floire attempts suicide several times, as we learn from this passage: had he had a blade of sword, he would have immediately stabbed his heart with it: ”S’il eüst une nue espee,/ tost l’eüst en son cuer boutee;” (vss. 797-798, ms. A). Since he does not have one, he regrets it dearly, adds the author: ”n’en a nule, ce poise li.” (vs. 799, ms. A). After having asked him to forgive them, the queen and the king called the best magician of the time, Barbarin, to comfort him. The magician was known for being able to turn stone into cheese, making oxen fly or making asses play the harp. He could even accept to have his head cut for twelve dinars, and give it to his assistant. The magic was that when the latter was asked to take a closer look at the head, he found a lizard or a grass snake instead. Barbarin could also breathe out a very thick smoke through his nose, thus turning completely invisible. He could also play with the minds of the people and make them believe the palace took fire when he blew at it. They would immediately start running to save their lives, but when they turned back, there was not even a gleam. The most judicious of them was taken to be insane. When

back in the hall, they would have another vision: nuns were holding monks by the neck at the same time as they held up a large knife at them. The other instant the vision was gone, and soon they understood it was stupid to fear enchantments: ”Or le voient et or nel voient./ Dont sorent bien que fol estoient/ quant il criement encantement” (vss. 843-845, ms. A).

At the king’s request, Barbarin tries to work magic on Floire, first by fetching a turtle-dove carrying a twelve-feet big topaz wheel in her beak. A golden statue as big as a peasant had been moulded there: ”Une ymage i avoit formee,/ d’or estoit, grant com un vilains.” (vss. 860-861, ms. A). The statue was holding a harp (lyre) and started to play the lai of Orpheus in a most exquisite manner. Those who listened to it were charmed. A knight arrived performing extraordinary jumps on his destrier: ”A tant es vos un chevalier/ mervilleus saus sor son destrier.” (vss. 868-869, ms. A). Then the knight sang a song that everyone but Floire liked enormously. They all enjoyed themselves, but Floire was unable to do so. He could not watch the show because of Blancheflor, and he left the palace: ”Trestout mainent joie et baudor,/ Flores ne puet; por Blanceflor/ le ju ne pooit esgarder./ Hors du palais s’en va ester.” (vss. 875-878, ms. A). Seeing that, the king bids Barbarin to stop the magic, which the latter does, but not before providing his usual trick, a vision. In this vision it seemed that the earth was shaking, and all threw themselves to the ground and fell asleep, all apart from Floire who had gone out. The author adds: ”saciés que pas ne s’endormi./ S’amie ne peut oublier,/ en son cuer prent a porpenser/ com el disoit:-”Dous amis Floire, aler en devés a Montoire.” (vss. 892-896, ms. A) (You know, he had not slept. He cannot cease to think of his beloved. In his heart he sees her when she said: ”Floire, my sweet friend (love), you must leave for Montoire.”).

The palace was quiet and all the people in it were fast asleep under the charms performed by Barbarin. Floire was the only one awake. He passed out several times, and when he regained consciousness he kept crying: ”Amie bele Blanceflor,/ por vos morra a grant dolor/ Flores! [...] (”My dear friend, sweet Blancheflor, for your love Floire will die of grief” vss. 901-903, ms. A). While thinking of killing himself, Floire’s eyes fell on the large pits where his father kept two ferocious and threatening lions. He thought of jumping there and letting himself be torn to pieces by the lions: ”A çou qu’il ert ensi pensans,/ esgarde et vit les fosses grans/ u li rois ot mis ses lions;/ .II. en i ot fiers et felons./ Porpensa soi que la iroit/ et dedens la fosse sauroit,/ as lions se feroit mangier.” (vss. 909-915, ms. A). After a prayer to God, Floire enters the den and cries: -”Blanceflor, bele douce amie,/ por vos vaurai perdre la vie!” (”Blancheflor, my sweet love, I am willing to sacrifice my life for you!” vss. 935-936, ms. A). Once inside the pit, an incredible thing happens: the lions fall to

their knees before Floire. Even the author finds it necessary to assure his audience that this is how the story came down to him:

Signor, çou trovons en l'esoire que molt grant joie font a Floire, les mains li baisent et les piés, sanlant font cascuns en soit liés. (vss. 939-942, ms. A)	Sirs, that's what the story tells: They greeted Floire merrily, kissed his hands and feet, and showed him their contentment.

Although he bids the lions to eat him and even hits them with his fists to make them angry, he does not succeed and grows even unhappier. The author intervenes again and tells the readers the rest of the story with Barbarin and his magic:

Or oiés de l'encanteor. L'encantement a fait finir et les chevaliers desdormir. Ne sevent u il ont esté, forment se tienent a gabé. (vss. 964-968, ms. A)	Now listen about the magician: He put an end to the spell, and awakened the knights. They wondered where they had been, and realized they had been deluded.

Both the king and his barons fainted at the news that Floire had gone into the den of lions. When they came to their sense and went searching for Floire, they were happy to find him safe and sound. Floire's intentions to kill himself do not end here, and manuscript V, as well as the saga, continue with the suicide attempt episode where the tool used was a clay-slate graft (a knife in the saga). The clay-slate graft (the knife) was given to Floire by Blancheflor on the last day they spoke to each other before his departure to Montoire. Both tools were supposedly used for writing in the respective cultures.

Another monologue follows, this time addressing the graft/knife:

"– Gref, fait il, a ço fus fait que fin meisses a cest pleit.[47] Mei te dunad pur remembrer de sei et a sun ous guarder[48] Blancheflur. Mes ore fei que deiz, mai li enveie, kar ço est dreiz. Mult me chalange Blancheflur, en ma vie trop i demur." (vss. 548-555, ms. V)	Graft, he said, you have been made to put an end to this affair. Blancheflor has given you to me to remind me of her and keep you in her interest. Now, do what you must, send me to her, as this is the right thing to do. Blancheflor urges me to her, I dwelt too long in this life.	"Þú knífr", sagði hann, "átt at enda mitt líf! Gaf þik mér til þess Blankiflúr, at gera minn vilja með þér: þú, Blankiflúr", segir hann, "vísa knífi þessum í brjóst mér!" (chapter VIII, 14, AM 575a 4to)	"Knife", he said, "you will put an end to my life! Blankiflur gave you to me to use you as I wish: "Blankiflur", he said, "show this knife the way to my chest!"

[47] The A manuscript in the 1980 edition sounded: "Qui fu messäges de cest plait" (Which bore witness to this intention vs. 1006).
[48] Floire reveals Blancheflor's intention that ahe wished he would write to her with that graft. Now he wants to use it to join her in death.

There is a passage in the romance which is omitted in the saga. The missing part is an allusion to other antiquity gods and characters who committed suicide for love and ended up in Hell. The queen resorted to this allusion in her despair to save her child from damnation:

”Minos, Thoas, Adamantus,[49]	Minos, Thoas, Rhadamante,
cil sunt jugeür de la jus,	these are the judges in Hell,
en enfern funt les jugemenz.	They would put you (second person plural) to
Cil vus metreient en turmenz,	torment where also Dido and Byblis dwell,
la u est Dido et Biblis[50]	they who killed themselves for love and
chi pur amur furent occis,	in Hell they drag along their sorrow.
pur amur en eunfern dol fesanz,	in search for their beloved ones.
lur druz en dulur queranz.	But they are and will keep on searching for them
Mes il les querent et querrunt	everyday without ever finding them.
tuz jurz et ja nes truverrunt. (vss. 576-585, ms. V)	

The saga author may not have found a corresponding story in the Norse mythology, but was Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* not known by the Norse audience? He does refer to Ovid earlier in the saga.

The V manuscript of the French story stops at verse 1156, at the beginning of another lyrical part, which the saga author turned into a monologue. The rhetorical dialogue expressing Floire’s hesitation and doubt (which I now turn to manuscript A to quote) are a sort of dialogue between Amors (or the god of love) and Savoirs (reason, represented by the goddess Pallas Athena/ Minerva).[51] In the saga monologue Flóres feels weak and foolish, regrets that he left home, but he soon comes back to his senses. In this monologue Flóres wonders if what he did was right. Again, we have an example of a typical psychological allegory in the French romance which is omitted, or rather transformed in the translated saga:

Savoir se met en son corage que il remembre son lignage et com il oirre folement. Fait il:-” Tu ne connois la	*Reason* enters his mind to remind him of his rank and how he acts foolishly. He says:-You	Nú hugsar Flóres með sér: ”Ek em einn konungsson, ok var mér gott heima. Em ek	Flóres thought to himself: ”I am a king’s son, and I had a good life at home. I have acted

[49] According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2003 DVD), in Athenian drama and legend Minos became the tyrannical exactor of the tribute of children to feed the Minotaur. Minos was killed in Sicily by the daughters of King Cocalus, who poured boiling water over him as he was taking a bath. After his death he became a judge in Hades (the dwelling place of the dead). Rhadamante, son of Zeus and Europa and brother of Minos, also became judge in Hades after his death. Thoas (Choas in ms. A, 1980) was one of the heroes who fought for the Greeks in the Trojan War, and, as Leclanche notes, had no relation to the judges in Hell. The third known judge in Hedas is Aeacus (Aiakos), a son of Zeus by nymph Aegina.

[50] According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2003 DVD), Dido was the reputed founder of Carthage who stabbed herself to escape from Iarbas. Byblis is the character in *Ovid’s Metamorphoses* book IX, who had incestuous longings for her brother Caunus.

[51] Since the saga does not include the rhetorical dialogue between Amors and Savoirs, it might be possible to assume that manuscript V did not include it, either, and that it was an addition of the later scribes (of mss. A and B, for instance). Yet, the lost part of the V manuscript says: ”Saveir se met en sun curage /que lui remembre sun parage/ et cum il erre folement./ Fait ele:-”Char tei tent...” (Reason enters his mind to remind him of his rank and how he acts foolishly. She said: ... vss. 1153-1156, ms. V- end of fragment).

gent,
Flores, ton consel u diras,
comment oirres et que quis as?
Se t'en descuevres, fols seras,
u soit a certes u a gas!

Par aucun l'amiraus l'orroit
qui ta folie conistroit.
Se il l'ooit, toi feroit prendre
et en aprés noier u pendre.
Fai que sages, arriere va!
Tes peres feme te donra
del miex de trestout son barnage,
pucele de grant parentage."

Amors respont:-"J'oi grant folie!
Raler? Et ci lairas t'amie?
Dont ne venis tu por li querre
et ça es venus de ta terre?
Dont ne te membre de l'autrier,
que del graffe de ton graffier
por li ocirre te vausis?
Et or penses de ton païs!

Et se tu sans li i estoies,
voelles u non, ça revenroies!
Porroies tu dont sans li vivre?
Se tel cuides, dont es tu yvre.
Tos l'ors del mont ne tos l'avoir
ne te feroit sans li manoir.
Remain ci, que sages feras,
puet estre encor le reveras.

N'est mie legiere a garder
la beste qui se veut embler!
S'ele t'i set, engien querra;
S'ele puet, a toi parlera.
Maint engion a Amors trové
et avoié maint esgaré.
Li vilains dist que Diex labeure,
quant il li plaist, en molt peu d'eure." (vss. 1603– 1642, ms. A)

don't know the people here, Flores, whom (where) will you tell your secret, how you travel and what you are looking for? If you reveal that, it would be foolish, whether you tell the truth or you joke!

Through someone, the emir will hear of your foolishness. If he hears it, he will catch you, and then drown you or hang you. Be wise, go back! Your father will give you, from the best of his baronage, a maid of high noble rank."

Amor (Love) answers:-I hear great stupidity! Go back? And leave your sweetheart here? Haven't you come to look for her, as you came without her from your country? Don't you remember that the other day, with the tip of the graft, you wanted to kill yourself for her? And now you think about your country!

And if you found yourself without her, whether you want it or not, you would return here! Would you be able to live without her? If you think so, then you are stupid. All the gold in the world and all the riches won't make you return without her. Stay here, it will be wise, maybe you will see her again.

It is not easy to guard the beast who wants to escape! If she knew you were here she would find a way to talk to you, if she could.
Amor has found more than one way and has mislaid them even more. Common people say that God works, when he wants to, in less than an

farinn sem eitt fól. Hverjum skal ek segja mitt erindi? Ek kann hér engan mann, ok ef ek segi nǫkkurum, þá em ek fól. En ef konungr verðr varr við mína ætlan, þá mundi hann láta veita mér háðuligan dauða."
"Er mér ráð at snúaz heim ok fá mér eitt ráð." En jafnskjótt kom honum annat í hug, ok sagði svá: "Eigi skal svá vera, ok vilda ek sjá hana, þvíat ek em nú hér kominn. Þat var mér þá í hug, at ek vilda leggja mik með knífinum. Er þat ok satt, þóat ek ætta alla verǫldina, þá vilda ek heldr Blankiflúr; en ef hon vissi, at ek væra hér, þá mundi hon við leita mik at finna, ok svá skal ek gera, þó þat verði minn bani." (chapters XIV, 14-XV, 1, ms. AM 575a 4to).

like a fool. Whom shall I tell my secret (purpose) to? I don't know anyone here, and if I tell someone, then I am a fool. If the king learns of my plans, then he will let me die a shameful death."
"It is advisable that I return home and get me a good match." Suddenly another thought came into his mind, and he said: "It will not be so, and I want to see her, now that I have come here. Then, I had in mind to kill myself with the knife. And the truth is that if I were to have the whole world, I would rather have Blankiflúr; if she knew I was here, she will want to find me, and I will do the same, even if that were my curse (death).

hour.

It is common for the Norse translator to omit details of meals as in the episode with Daires and Lídernis, yet one noteworthy detail is the lyrical part that follows. The golden goblet that Blancheflor was sold for, which was now in Floire's possession, was brought before his eyes. The sight of it and of the image of Paris holding Helen's hand, brings forth another allegory: "Amors ralume son corage/ se li dist" (vs. 1700-1701, ms. A – Amors relights his courage and he tells him...) followed by an imaginary dialogue between Amor and Floire. The saga translates the allegory above as: "en þá tók ást at reyna hugskot hans, ok hugsaði hann þetta, at" (chapter XV, 10, ms. AM 575a 4to – and then love began to try his mind, and he thought that ...):

–"Or aies envie: ci en maine Paris s'amie. Ha! Diex! verrai jou ja le jor k'ensi en maigne Blanceflor? Diva, Floires! aprés mangier te doit tes ostes consillier." (vss. 1701-1706, ms. A)	"Now you have the challenge: Paris is holding his sweetheart's hand." "Oh, God, will I see the day when, likewise, I hold Blancheflor's hand?" "Come on, Floire! After dinner, your host must give you advice."	"Paris leiddi unnust*a* sína, en þú fær eigi þína. En mættir þú sjá þann dag, at þú leiddir svá Blankiflúr? Hversu má þat verða? En þú veizt enn eigi, vesall! hvar hon er. Júr, Flóres", sagði hann, "vel má svá verða, þvíat húsbóndi þinn gerfr þér gott ráð, þegar vér erum mettir." (chapter XV, 10-11, ms. AM 575a 4to).	"Paris went hand in hand with his sweetheart, but you don't have yours. And do you want to see the day when you likewise hold (walk with) Blancheflor? How will it be? You don't know yet, you poor soul, where she is." "Well, Flóres", he said, "it must turn out well, because your host gives you good advice, as soon as we have eaten.

The dialogue between Amors (love) and Floire has been kept entirely and even elaborated a little bit in comparison to the French romance. It is not turned into a monologue or into Flóres' thoughts, as it is typical for the translated sagas. This proves a clear influence from the French romance and is another example of faithful translation.

The garden by the *Tower of Maidens* is described in the saga, as well, although not as elaborately as in the French version.[52] Earlier in the saga, the description of the garden at King Felix's court, which appeared allegorically in connection with the love between the two children, was omitted, as was the description of the trees and birds sorrounding the cenotaph. To me, the emir's garden seems artificial. It is green during both summer and winter. With the songs of birds and the smell of herbs and spices the place seemed Paradise itself. The French manuscript specifies all the rare spices and plants that could be found in

[52] The only existing manuscripts that have this episode are A and B. The fact that certain aspects are more elaborately presented in them, does not necessarily mean the saga author omitted them. As I have mentioned it before, we don't have the original manuscript to compare the saga with, and manuscript V is incomplete. The following observations regarding manuscripts A or B are therefore only informative.

the garden, and the author concludes that he does not believe there are so many spices between the East and the West: ”il n’en a tant, mon escient,/ entre Orient et Occident” (vss. 1792-1793, ms. B). The birds and animals are made of copper, gold-plated and placed on many precious stones on the wall surrounding the garden. When the wind blows, they look alive, and the birds sing. The French manuscript A writes that both real and artificial birds can be found in the garden, and the author comes with a a long list of real birds: ”des oisiaus i a si douc cri, / et tant de faus et tant de vrais, / merles et calendres et gais/ et estorniaus et rosignos,/ et pinçonés et espringos” (vss. 1998-2002, ms. A).[53] A remark from the part of the author, as I also noted in the description of the birds surrounding the cenotaph, is present in the French romance: ”qui les sons ot et l’estormie,/ molt est dolans qu’il n’a s’amie.” (vss. 2005-2006, ms. A – One who hears the sounds and the merry warbling feels deeply miserable without his/her sweetheart).[54] The stream of water in the garden comes from Paradise and is called the *Euphrates*.[55] In the water, there are all sorts of precious stones. Among them were the hyacinth, chalcedony, chrysolite, crystal, emerald, and many others. Further on, we are told that both the emir and his kings watch the maidens go over a brook, and the one who proves not to be a virgin (when the brook turns red) is killed. This is, in my view, an image of death and not of Paradise, as initially intended. It is suggested that even the maids go into the garden sorrowfully, because they do not want the honour that will ultimately bring their death. The French manuscript A expresses the same idea ironically: ”A la dame est l’onors rendue.” (vs. 1972, ms. A – The lady is given the honour.), ”A une autre est l’ennor rendue,” (vs. 1737, ms. B – To another one is given the honour.) The nature is beautiful, but at the same time distant and strange. In the middle of the garden there is a spring in a silver square, and a tree in everlasting bloom grows there. In the Old French version the tree is called *the tree of love*: ”l’apelë on l’arbre d’amors:” (vs. 2048, ms. A), ”l’apele l’en l’arbre d’amours:” (vs. 1807, ms. B). The artificialness of the garden is also suggested by the emir’s trick that a flower should fall from the tree on the most virtuous and beautiful of the maids. Thus he will marry the chosen one for one year and then kill her, because he does not want any other man to have her: ”ok at augsjándum þeim ǫllum lætr hann drepa hana, þvíat hann vill, at engi maðr hafi þá konu, siðan hann hefir haft.” (chapter

[53] The translation of some of these birds in English is: blackbirds, ... , jays, starlings, nightingales, finches, orioles. Manuscript B begins by mentioning a few, but does not continue with the rest, after jays.
[54] The same two lines appear in manuscript B.
[55] *Euphrates* is in Bagdad and is traditionally considered to be one of the four rivers of Eden, but it has been suggested above that the town to which Floire travels is Alexandria, and the river would then have to be the Nile. The Nile has often been mistaken for the *Euphrates*.

XVI, 18, AM 575a 4to). [56] The Old French manuscript A is more specific and says that the emir does not want any cleric or knight to have the woman he has had: ”Ne veut que clerc ne chevalier/ ait la feme qu’il a eüe. (la fame aient qu’avra eüe.)” (vss. 1970-1971, ms. A, vss. 1735-1736, ms. B). The emir calls all the kings in his subordination to attend this ritual every year, and this will happen within a month. There were rumours that the emir likes Blancheflor best, because there is no one more beautiful among all the maids: ”Segja menn, at hann vili nú eiga Blankiflúr; en í þeim meyjum ǫllum er engi jafnfríð” (chapter XVII, 2, AM 575a 4to) and he intends to marry her. There is, in the French text, manuscript A, a subtle word game, an allusion to Blancheflor´s name, and the central motif in the *Conte*: ”Blanceflor dist k’adont prendra,/ sor totes autres ciere l’a;/ es .VII. vins n’a si bele flor,” (vss. 2097-2099, ms. A – They say he will have Blancheflor; to all others, he prefers her; among his one hundred and forty flowers, he does not have a more beautiful one). In the figurative sense, *flor* means elite, while in the symbolic sense it means chastity. As the name of the tower also suggests, all the girls are chaste.[57] The fact that Blancheflor stands out from the rest of the maids through her unsurpassed beauty and that the emir becomes attached to her above all others demonstrates, according to Kinoshita, Christianity’s triumph over pagandom (Kinoshita 2003: 231).

In the French romance, Fortuna intervenes to describe, in an elaborate manner, the happiness that turns into bad luck. The goddess Fortuna is only implied in the Norse saga, and the episode is described as a game:

Se cele vie lor durast, ja mais cangier ne le rovast Flores li biaus et Blanceflor; ensi menaissent lor amor. Mais ne porent, car lor amors torna Fortune, par ses mors. De lor amor et de lor vie demoustra bien qu’ele ot envie. Por çou que d’aus voloit juer, sor aus fait sa roe torner. Or les avoit assis desus, et abatre les revelt jus. Çou est ses jus, c’est sa nature, en çou met s’entente et sa cure, bien le connoissent tout li mont car tout le sentent qui i sont, [...] As uns taut et as autres done,	If this life of theirs could have lasted, they would have never wanted to change it; the beautiful Floire and Blanchelor would have carried on with their love like this. But they could not, because Fortune, in her manner, made their love topple over. She proved well that she hated their love and life. Against those she wants to play with, she turns her wheel. Now that she had placed them up, she wanted them to fall down. That’s how	En hamingja þeira, er sumir menn kalla gæfu, skipti brátt um sœmð þeira eptir sinni venju ok gerði þau nóg sorgfull, sem þau váru glǫð áðr, þvíat var hennar leikr, at hon hóf þau upp um stund, ok niðraði síðan. Ok er engi svá óvitr, ok fylgir honum gæfan, at hann er eigi kallaðr vitr; en er gæfan minkar, þá heitir hann fól. (chapter XIX, 9, AM	But their spirit of protection, which some people call happiness, put a sudden end to their honour-as it is in her nature-and made them as sorrowful as they were happy before, because it was her game to lift them up for a while and degrade them afterwards. And nobody is so ignorant that, when happiness follows him, he is not called smart; but

[56] The important piece of information that the emir’s wife is killed every year when he finds himself another maiden is omitted from manuscript AM 489 4to of the saga.
[57] Manuscript B does not include the flower word-game. It is rather similar to the saga.
[58] This is obviously the saying of a poor cleric. Some suggested that the author of the book, supposedly Robert d’Orbigny, was such a cleric who ”fait pain querans”.

.VII. fois mue entre prime et none. El ne garde pas a proece a doner largement rikece; ce set on bien, au fol prové done roiame u grant conté et les veskiés done as truans et les boins clers fait pain querans. Qui en li cuide estableté, je le tieng bien por fol prové; qui en son doner point se fie ne connoist pas sa drüerie. Or fait irier et or fait rire, or done joie et or done ire; ceus fist primes joieus et liés, puis angoisseus et coreciés. (vss. 2491-2524, ms. A)	her game is, this is her nature; in this she puts effort and takes pleasure. The whole world knows her well, because they all suffer from her blows. [...] She takes away from some and gives to others, she changes seven times between dawn and dusk. She does not appreciate prowess when she offers great riches. It is known, to the one who proves a fool she gives kingdom or great earldom. The bishoprics, she gives to rascals, while the good clerics make a living by begging.[58] Those who believe in her steadfastness, I regard as proved fools. Who does not confine in her favours does not know her solicitude. Now she makes one furious, and now she makes one laugh, now she gives joy and now bitterness; these ones (Floire and Blancheflor) were first joyous and content, then anguished and distressed.	575a 4to).	when happiness grows less, then he is called a fool.

6.5. *Courtoisie* expressed through generosity

Being courteous also implies generosity. Floire shows his generosity towards his hosts by offering them a golden cup to make up for the wine he spilt accidentally when he found out in which direction he must continue his search for Blancheflor. Both the French and the Norse versions mention this moment. His generosity is also linked to his great joy at the news:

Floires une cupe d'or fin emplir ad fait de bon vin, a s'oste ad fait le present, puis li dit :-"Dame, icest vus rent pur ço que m'avés dit nuvele de Blancheflur la damoisele." (vss. 867-872, ms. V)	Floire filled a beaker of fine gold with good wine, and made a present of it to his hostess. Then he said: "– Lady, I give you this because you told me news of Blancheflur the maid."	Þá bað Flóres fylla ker eitt af gulli ok fekk húsfreyjunni: "Damma", segir hann, "þetta ker gef ek þér fyrir þá sǫgu, er þú sagðir mér af Blankiflúr, ok fyrir hennar sǫk var ek hryggr, fyrir því at ek vissa eigi, hvert ek skylda leita hennar. (chapter XI, 1, AM 575a 4to).	Then Floire asked that a golden cup be filled, and he handed it to the landlady: "Lady", he says, "I am giving you this cup for that news you gave me of Blankiflúr; for her sake I was sorrowful, because I did not know where I should look for her.

Besides the golden cup, Floire/ Flóres paid his hosts for board and lodging and offered them an extra gift (OF): ”Quant sun cunrai out aquité,/ a sun ost ad del sun duné,” (ms. V, vss. 909-910)/ Flóres took his leave of his host and gave him 100 shilling and something for each servant: ”en þá tók Flóres leyfi af húsbónda sínum ok gaf honum hundrað skillinga, ok hverju hjóna nǫkkut [...] (chapter XI, 4, AM 575a 4to) or 80 shilling and something for each servant: ”Tók Flóres leyfi af bónda ok húsfrú, ok gaf þeim LXXX skillínga ok hverr hinna nokkut, [...]” (chapter 8, AM 489 4to).[59]

They crossed the Mediterranean in eight days, by the so-called ’French road’ across the sea, re-territorializing the Mediterranean as the space not of *translatio* but of trade circuits connecting Cairo and al-Andalus. Taking the French road or, in other words, to go ’a camin francese’ or ’camino francés’ was to sail straight ahead to the port of Baudas (OF)/ Beludátor (ON) (Alexandria).[60] The traditional practice was to sail from port to port, selling old goods and aquiring new ones at each stop along the way.[61] From there they travelled a further four days to Cairo by horse.

Floire’s generosity is shown again in the extra amount of money he pays the captain of the ship that brought them to Alexandria, namely twenty gold marks and twenty silver marks (OF) ”vint mars d’or fin et .XX. d’argent” (vs. 955, ms. V)/ ten pure silver marks and five gold marks (ON) ”hann gaf honum X merkr skíra silfrs ok V merkr gulls” (chapter XII, 5, AM 575a 4to).

His generosity is equally great with his second host to whom he offers a well-made coat and a beautiful silver beaker: ”Floires l’en dune un bon mantel/ et un hanap d’argent bel:” (vss. 1025-1026, ms. V)/ ”[...] varð hann þá glaðr ok bað taka silkiskikkju ok safal undir, ok gaf húsbónda [...] (chapter XIII, 3, AM 575a 4to). In the Old Norse version Flóres gives his host only a sable-coated silk cloak.

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[59] Brynjolf Snorrason notes that the sentence is a bit unclear because the manuscript is in poor condition (Snorrason 1850: 28).

[60] Leclanche suggests that the port close to Cairo can only be Alexandria, although the name Baudas, might suggest Bagdad (Leclanche 2003: 69). There are indirect allusions to the Lighthouse of Alexandria: ”De iloc pot hum quant il fait cler/ cent lius lung veer en mer.” (vss. 943-944, ms. V)/ ”[...] ok má sjá Þaðan í haf út C vikna at skíru veðri.” (from there you could see one hundred miles away in the sea in good weather-chapter XII, 3, AM 575a 4to), as well as to the customs procedures, i.e. giving away one sixth of the goods and paying a tax to the governor of the city, Marsil, swearing that they have nothing else to declare: ”tut lur estout duner al port/ la siste part de lur aveir,/ et puis jurer que il dient veir,/ et rendre tut a dam Marsile,/ cil qui maistres est de la vile.” (vss. 990-994, ms. V)/ ”En borg Þá átti konungr af Babilón, ok hafði svá mælt við gjaldkerann, at hann skyldi taka toll af hverjum manni, er Þar fœri, ok eið með, at hann fœri með engum svikum.” (chapter XII, 7, AM 575a 4to). The Old Norse version does not mention how much they had to pay in this passage, but later in the text, the host asks Flores if he is upset for the 10% taxes: ”Þvíat Þat er enn tíundi hverr peningr” (chapter XII, 9, AM 575a 4to). Marsile is not named but could be implied by the word tax-collector (gjaldkerann).

[61] Sharon Kinoshita refers to Fernand Braudel who writes that the designation ’camino francés’ is a turn of phrase that strikingly echoes the Santiago trail (Braudel 1972: 107).

6.6. *Courtoisie* expressed through bravery

During his voyage to Babylon, Floire must prove his bravery on various occasions. First he must act as a merchant and a lord for his people. Although still a teenager, as one understands, it seems to be expected of him to act as an adult: his mother told him that it was childish to wish one's death, while his behaviour before the hostess proved that he was no merchant, but a young nobleman longing for his sweetheart. His grieving will continue to reveal his age and rank along the way.

Floire and Blancheflor cry when they are discovered. This reveals their young age once again: "Flores plora et Blanceflor" (vs. 2667, ms. A), "Pleure Floires et Blancheflor" (vs. 2458, ms. B), "tóku þau þá at gráta," (chapter XXI, 3, AM 575a 4to). Floire/ Flóres behaves like a child rather than a knight. He will have to prove his bravery during the single combat which only appears in the saga.

6.7. Clerical or chivalric tone?

From the point where the trial is about to start the saga and the romance are different. In the saga, the king is angry and, not being able to understand how Flóres got into the tower, he accuses him of witchcraft. Flóres explains that he is not a wizard but the son of the king of Naples. He also explains he is justified in trying to take Blankiflúr back: she is his lover, and she was carried away against their will. He concluded his speech and asked for a single combat with one of the emir's knights. The result of this combat will decide Flóres' fate. If beaten, Flóres will be killed, if he wins, then he will get Blankiflúr, save the gatekeeper's life, and get back all the money he spent while searching for Blankiflúr:

Flóres svarar: "Herra, hvárki em ek galdramaðr né gerninga. En ef þú vilt víst vita, hvat manna ek sé, þá segi ek þér, at ek em son Felix konungs af borg þeiri, er Aples heitir. Eigi gerða ek þat sakir ǫfundar við þik, heldr sakir réttinda, at ek tók Blankiflúr, unnustu mína, þvíat hon var rangliga seld ok stolin frá mér, meðan ek var í skóla; ok síðan fór ek at leita hennar með þessum hætti," [...] "Býð ek mik til einvígis fyrir mik ok Blankiflúr ok dyrvǫrð, at ek hefi rétt at mæla." (chapter XXII, 10-11, AM 575a 4to).

Flóres answers: "Sir, I am neither wizard nor magician. But if you want to know for sure what kind of man I am, then I tell you that I am the son of king Felix of the town called Aples. I did not act out of hatred for you, but rather out of justice, when I took Blankiflúr, my sweetheart, because she was unjustly sold and stolen from me, while I was at school; since then, I have travelled and looked for her in this manner." [...] I offer to undertake a single combat for me, Blankiflúr and the gate-keeper, (to prove) that I have told the truth."

As we can see, love is subordinated to the battle. As Sävborg underlined, proving chivalric skills was more important than the *courtly love* ideal itself, in the sagas. This is a typical feature of the indigenous sagas. In the romance, the age of Floire is revealed as being fifteen: ".XV. ans" (vs. 2848, ms. A)/ ".XIIII. anz" (vs. 2622, ms. B), and in spite of his age,

he looked mature. The romance (at least manuscripts AB) focuses more on the characters' beauty, sensitivity and fragile nature when they are confronted with death. A number of characters of the *romans d'antiquité* are named in connection with the beauty of Floire and Blancheflor:

Paris de Troies n'Asalon, Partenopiex n'Ipomedon, ne Leda ne sa fille Helaine, pour cui Paris ot mainte painne, en lor aez tant bel ne furent con cil erent quant morir durent. (vss. 2614-2619, ms. B)	Neither Paris of Troy, nor Absalon, Partenope nor Ipomedon, nor Leda nor her daughter Helen, for whom Paris endured great pain, at the top of their happiness, they were not as beautiful as were those (two) when they were to die.

Two long portraits of the heroes follow. They are described as uniquely beautiful: long blond hair, brown eyebrows, white and clear skin, perfect mouths and teeth and slender bodies. The entire audience present at their trial is moved to tears by their beauty and their fate. People burst out crying, and the duke who found the golden ring is so moved that he goes to the emir to relate the dialogue he overheard between Floire and Blancheflor. The emir then decides to interrogate the two children. Angry as he was, the emir wanted to cut their heads off himself, but he was moved to tears when he saw how each of them wanted to die first and asked for the other one to be spared. The emir dropped his sword, moment in which the duke tried to persuade the earls and barons of a better sentence for the couple. The duke's suggestion was that the emir should show mercy on Floire and Blancheflor and let them live provided that Floire told everyone by which strategy he came into the tower. Floire refuses to admit anything if the emir does not grant his helpers clemency. This upsets the emir and he does not want to consider clemency. A bishop stood up and uttered:[62]

car domages seroit molt grant s'ensi moroient li enfant, car de lor biauté n'est mesure. Plus biax ne fist onques Nature." (vss. 3069-3072, ms. A)	It would be a great pity if these children died like this, because their beauty has no match. Nature has never created anything more beautiful.

At the end of his speech, Floire falls to the emir's feet and thanks him. The emir takes Floire's hand, then Blancheflor's and says: "– Je vos rent, fait il, vostre amie." ("I give you your sweetheart." vs. 3115, ms. A). Their mutual love and extraordinary beauty amaze the emir and his kings, and the lovers are not only spared, but also united in marriage. Floire's speech is convincing enough and by his courtly manner and nature he wins over the emir and his kings. The duel is inexistent in the romance (I am referring to the first version), but

[62] The bishop could have been a member of the growing Christian communities in the East or a pagan prelate.

Floire is dubbed knight by the emir and equipped with the best armour he had: ”Flore veut faire chevalier./ Des millors armes que il ot/ le conrea au miex qu'il pot.” (vss. 3120-3122, ms. A). When he was dubbed knight, Floire was taken to a church or a pagan temple (*moutier*) where he married Blancheflor: ”Blancheflor li fet espouser.” (vs. 2894, ms. B). Gloris (Claris), whom we hear nothing more of in the saga, becomes the emir's queen, at Blancheflor's advice. Together they asked to emir not to kill her after one year, as he did with all other wives, but to keep her all his life. Manuscript B repeats the ritual by which the emir used to get his wife (the proof of virginity):

Claris [...] s'a la fontaine trespassee;
l'eve remaint en sa color
en onques ne mua color.
Quant passee fu la pucele,
l'eve remest et clere et bele.
Une flor de l'arbre sailli,
desus la chief Claris chaï.”
(vss. 2904-2911, ms. B)

Claris crossed the fountain (brook);
The water remained pure
and never changed its colour.
When the maid was taken through (the brook),
the water remained clear and beautiful.
A flower of the tree became loose,
and over the head of Claris it fell.

while manuscript A only recounts her coronation. Weare not told anything about the fate of the emir's previous wife. A royal celebration of the weddings follows and both manuscripts give a detailed description of the food and wine that were served and the music which was played. During the celebration, ten knights arrive with a sealed letter for Floire: ”Atant es vous .X. chevaliers/ qui aportent a Floire briés.” (vss. 3199-3200, ms. A, vss. 2960-2961, ms. B). The knights had come to announce the death of Floire's parents and to ask him to return to his kingdom. Floire asks for the emir's permission to leave, although the latter asked them to stay in return for a kingdom and a crown. The *courtois* generosity of Floire is shown in the gifts he gives his host Daire and his wife Licoris: ”Flores a son oste apelé/ molt grant avoir li a doné./ .X. coupes d'or et .XX. d'argent/ li fait doner joieusement [...] et une riche coupe d'or/ qu'il aporta de son tresor/ done a s'ostesse Licoris,/ et .X. mantiaus que vairs que gris.” (Floire called his host and gave him (happily) a lot of money: ten cups of golds and twenty of silver [...] and to his hostess, Licoris, he gave a rich golden cup from his treasury and ten squirrel-fur coats – vss. 3255-3266, ms. A).[63] He offered precious fabric or silk to all the servants as well: ”Cascun de ceus de la maison/ dona u paile u siglaton.” (vss. 3267-3268, ms. A). When they left, Floire greeted everyone in a wise and courtly manner: ”Et il les a salués tous/ com cil qui ert sages et prous.” (vss. 3277-3278, ms. A).[64] On their return to Floire's country, Floire and Blancheflor were well received by all

[63] Manuscript B lacks these lines.
[64] This conventional manner of qualifying the well-educated hero only appears in manuscript A.

barons and Blancheflor's mother. For the love of Blancheflor, Floire converted to Christianity: "Por Blanceflor, la soie amie,/ mena puis crestiiene vie." (vss. 3303-3304, ms. A), "Pour Blancheflor, la soe amie,/ a pris la crestïenne vie." (vss. 3008-3009, ms. B). Even Charlemagne in *Le Chanson de Roland* makes an exception and allows the Saracen queen to be taken to sweet France as a captive and convert *par amur*: "ne mais sul la reïne:/ En France dulce iert menee caitive,/ Ço vœlt li reis, par amur cunvertisset." (Roland 1990: st. 266, vss. 3672-3674). Floire christens all his barons and his people peacefully: "par bonne amor" (vs. 3012, ms. B). Yet the context of tolerence and generosity that has characterized most of the story is spotted with the cruelty of killing for a forced baptism of some of his unwilling people: "Qui bauptizier ne se voloit/ ne en Dieu croire ne voloit,/ Floires le feisoit detrenchier,/ ardoir en feu ou escorchier." (Floire skinned, burnt and quartered all who did not want to be baptized, or to believe in God – vss. 3020-3023, ms. B). This scene anticipates the closing scenes of *Le Chanson de Roland* where Charlemagne's troops ravage the mosques and synagogues of Saragossa, burning all those who refused conversion:

Li emperere ad Sarraguce prise, A mil Franceis fait ben cercer la vile, Les sinagoges e les mahumeries; (Roland 1990: st. 266, vss. 3660-3662)	The emperor has taken Saragossa, a thousand Franks (he sends to) search the town, the synagogues and the pagan temples.
Li reis creit Deu, faire voelt sun servise, E si evesque les eves beneïssent, Meinent paiens entresqu'al baptistirie. S'or i ad cel qui Carle cuntredie, Il le fait prendre o ardeir ou ocire. (ibid., vss. 3666-3670).	The king believes in God and wants to serve him, his bishops bless the waters and bring the pagans to the baptistry. If there is one who opposes Charles, he has him imprisoned, burnt or killed.

In the end of the French romance we are told that Blancheflor's mother married the richest and most powerful duke in the kingdom, and that the goddess Fortuna, who brought her as low as possible, lifted her now to the top (of her happiness): "Fortune qui l'a mise jus/ moult tost l'avra mise desus." (vss. 3032-3033, ms. B).

The final lines in the romance are:

Chi fenist li contes de Floire. Diex nos mece tos en sa gloire! (vss. 3341-3342, ms. A)	Here ends the story of (king) Floire. May God have us all in his glory!
Ci faut li contes du roi Floire. Diex nous mete toz en sa gloire! (vss. 3038-3039, ms. B)	

Considering the chivalric character of the whole second version and the chivalric end of the saga, one might believe there is a connection, or that the translator had access to this

translation. Yet, the end of the second version is lost, so it is impossible to compare the end of the saga with the missing end of this version.

The love story and Floire's speech is not enough in the saga. Floire must prove himself brave in battle, as well. If we consider the pattern of indigenous sagas, *islendingasögur*, then the omission of the detailed presentation of the couple's beauty and of the *omnia vincit amor* - end of the romance was done intentionally. Speech is a common feature for both genres, but the courtly ideal is only kept in the French romance.

The last chapter in the Norse saga consists mostly of the tournament. The saga describes each episode in the single combat:

Í fyrstu atreið þá brotnaði hvárstveggja burtstǫng. Drógu þeir þá sverð sín ór slíðrum; hjó Flóres í skjǫld riddarans, ok klauf niðr í mundriða, ok sundr axlarbeinit et vinstra. En síðan hjó riddarinn skjǫld Flóres í sundr eptir endilǫngu, en eigi kom hann sári á Flóres. Ríðaz at í annat sinn; hjó Flóres af honum hǫndina vinstri ok ofan í sǫðulbogann, ok háls af hesti hans. Nú hjó riddarinn með mikilli reiði, ok í sundr helming, er eptir var, ok á fót hesti hans, svá at hann fell. Eru þeir nú báðir á fœti; hjó þá riddarinn til Flóres, ok í hǫfuð honum svá hart, at af tók fjórðung af hjálmi hans, ok svá at blœddi. Ok hugðu menn, at þá mundi hann gefaz; en honum barg sá steinn, er var í því gulli, er móðir hans hafði gefit honum. Hjó hann þá með mikilli reiði til riddarans, ok á ǫxl honum, svá at tók ena hœgri hǫndina með ǫllu. (chapter XXIII, 2-5, AM 575a 4to).

During the first ride both lances broke. Then they drew their swords out of the sheath; Flóres cut the knight's shield in two and cut his left shoulder. The knight cut along Flóres' shield, but he did not cause Flóres any harm. They rode now for the second time; Flóres cut his (the knight's) left hand and through the saddle-bow and the horse's neck. The knight struck now angrily and cut in two what was left (of Flóres' shield) and his horse's foot, so that he fell. They were both on their feet now; the knight hit Flóres in the head so hard that a fourth of his helmet fell off and there (Flóres) was bleeding. People thought he would give in; but he was saved by the stone in that golden ring his mother had given him. Then Flóres struck angrily towards the knight and cut through his shoulder so that his entire right hand (arm) fell off.

Flóres took off his armour and they were at peace. The king offered him money and a kingdom, but Flóres refuses because of his homesickness. In spite of his homesickness, they remained in Babylon for twelve months. Flóres triumph helped reconfigure the political order of Babylon (Cairo) itself: the gatekeeper and Daires were forgiven, the gate-keeper became earl and Daries was made gate-keeper. The ferryman got the house that Daries had before. King Marsilias was made king (probably a higher title than he already had) over his area. In the end, Flóres and the emir became friends. In fifteen days ("á XV dœgrum" chapter XXIII, 9, AM 575a 4to) Flóres and Blankiflúr managed to sail home. [65] Flóres' parents were dead when they arrived, and Flóres was crowned king. The newly established friendship between Flóres and the emir materialized in the exchange of exquisite gifts: "ok fóru jafnan gjafir á milli konunganna." (chapter XXIII, 9, AM 575a 4to). Then, Flóres and Blankiflúr got married.

[65] The same number is used in AM 489 4to.

Another difference between the versions is how many children Flóres and Blankiflúr had. The saga says that after the wedding, they had three years (winters) of peace and had three sons: ”Síðan váru þau í kyrrsetu III vetr ok gátu III sonu.” (chapter XXIII, 10, AM 575a 4to). The French, German and the English versions mention one child, Bertha, mother of Charlemagne.[66]

At Blankiflúr’s request, they went where her relatives came from. They went to Rome then rode to Paris with three hundred horses (they had three horses on each ship they took along). They met earls and dukes, her relatives, who welcomed her with great joy. During their three months’ stay they visited beautiful churches. When Flóres wanted to go back home, Blankiflúr threatened him with celibacy unless he convert to Christianity within five years (winters):[67]

Þá mælti Blankiflúr: ”Segja vil ek yðr heit mitt, er ek hét, þá er ek kom í Babilón, ok ek hugðumz þik aldri sjá mundu; en ef vit fyndumz, þá hét ek því, at innan V vetra skylda ek skiljaz við þik ok fara til hreinlífis, nema þér takið við kristni. Nú kjósið annathvárt!”

Flóres mælti: ”Nú á þessum degi vil ek við kristni taka.”

Blankiflúr said: ”I want to tell you of a promise that I made when I came to Babylon and I thought I would never see you again; if we were to find each other, I promised that within five winters I would depart from you and live in celibacy, unless you adopted Christianity. Now you must choose!”
Flóres said: ”Now, this very day, I want to adopt Christianity.”

Flóres and the people who were with him were all baptized. They took a bishop any many priests with them. There is a similarity between the French romance and the saga with regard to the baptism of the base-born people by means of violence in the cases when they would not convert of their own will: ”en hverr er eigi vildi, þá lét konungr drepa þá alla.” (chapter XXIII, 16, AM 575a 4to). Then they built churches: Flóres built a monastery for monks and Blankiflúr a nunnery: ”Síðan lét hann kirkjur gera; efldi Flóres munklífi, en Blankiflúr nunnusetr.” (id.) When they were seventy, they devided the kingdom between their sons, who were now adults. Then Flóres went to the monk monastery and Blankiflúr to the nunnery, and they ended their days on earth there, in the service of God: ”En er þau váru LXX vetra gǫmul, skiptu þau ríki í milli sona sinna, þvíat þeir váru þá vaxnir. Síðan fór Flóres í munklífi, en Blankiflúr í nunnusetr, ok endu sína lífdaga þar í guðs þjónustu.” (chapter XXIII, 17, AM 575a 4to).

[66] We learnt about that in the prologue. It is not repeated in the end of the romance.
[67] Like Flóres earlier in the saga, Blankiflúr expresses doubt or hesitation through this request.

6.8. Other differences between the romance and the saga

According to the author, the events must have taken place more than 200 years before the tale was related to the poet by two young, beautiful and loving sisters. From the prologue we learn that Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr is the mother of Bertha Bigfoot ("Berte as grans piés", verse 9, ms. A), Charlemagne's mother. Besides sketching the plot in the prologue, the poet tells us that Floire became king of Hungary and of the whole of Bulgaria, upon the death of the heirless king of Hungary, brother of Floire's mother.

Another point of interest in the prologue is the initial message:

Signor, oiiés, tot li amant, cil qui d'amors se vont penant, li chevalier et les puceles, li damoisel, les damoiseles! Se mon conte volés entendre, Molt i porrés d'amors aprendre: (vss. 1-6, ms. A)	Lords, listen, all lovers, all those who know the trouble of love, knights and maids, noble young men and ladies! If you deigned to lend an ear to my account, You would learn a lot about love.

The absence of this passage from the saga does not necessarily mean that the Norse translator did not have access to it. Seen against the final paragraph in the saga:

"Gefi Jesus Christus segjundum ok heyrundum, at vér megum svá várt líf enda í guðs þjónustu, at sálir várar ǫðliz eilífa hjálp ok himinríkis inngǫngu, at œstu tíð veraldar. Amen." (chapter XXIII, 18)	May Jesus Christ give the tellers and the listeners (inspiration) so that, for our part, we shall thus end our lives in the service of God, and (so) that our souls receive eternal help and admission into the Kingdom of Heaven at the end of this world. Amen.

the message conveyed by the romance is more inclined towards giving the audience a lesson of love. On the other hand, the message of the saga is moralizing and religiously loaded. More parts of the saga point in that direction, and I will refer to them as I go along, so as to emphasize the transformations that occured during the translation process.

Another important aspect in the prologue is the information concerning how romances were told, heard and written down. As far as the writer of *the Conte de Floire et de Blancheflor* is concerned, he admits having heard the romance in a ladies' chamber:

En une cambre entrai l'autrier, un venredi aprés mangier, por deporter as damoiseles dont en la cambre avoit de beles [...] Illoec m'assis por escouter .II. dames que j'oï parler. Eles estoient .II. serours; ensamble parloient d'amors. Les dames erent de parage, cascune estoit et bele et sage. (vss. 33-36; 43-48,	The other day I entered a chamber, – It was a Friday after dinner – to find pleasure with the noble and beautiful young ladies who were there. [...] There I sat down to listen to two ladies that I heard speak. They were two sisters; together they spoke of love. The ladies were high-born, beautiful and wise.

ms. A)

This must have been one of the common ways in which such tales were transmitted orally and then recorded in writing. Imperative forms like ”Signor, oiiés, tot li amant [...]” or the verb ”oir” (to hear) used in contexts such as: ”Livres lisoient paienors u ooient parler d’amors.” (They read pagan books in which they heard of love) prove that the corpus of romances were part of an oral tradition that gradually took a written shape.

At the beginning of the saga, King Felix (ON)/Felis (OF, ms. A) is said to come from a Spanish town called Aples.[68] The Old French text does not begin by specifying which town in Spain the king came from, but refers to the town of Naples in verse 121.[69] In his raid to plunder the Christians, King Felix went from Naples to Galicia/ Jacobs-land (ON), more precisely to Santiago de Compostella in the north of Spain (Grieve 1997).

The reference to animals in Old French is made by means of ox and cows, whereas the Old Norse version refers to a dog and a cock: (OF) ”ne remest ainc ne bués ne vace” (verse 71, ms. A) and (ON) ”ok eigi gó hundr ok eigi gól hani” (chapter I, 3). Are they symbols for anything in particular in the respective cultures? Most probably we speak of metaphorical expressions, alliterations or proverbs that are either typical French or typical Norse. The same concept can be expressed differently.

The twelfth century was a period of intense exchange in translations. Greek science and philosophy reached the Latin West through Arabic texts and commentaries. If Ovid were not mentioned as the author of the lovers’ book, one could be tempted to believe that the pagan book they read was a treatise in the Arabic tradition, like Kinoshita’s suggestion (2003: 227) of Ibn Hazm’s *Neck Ring of the Dove*, which is sometimes referred to as inspiring for the emergence of troubadour verse. The question of the Arabic origin of troubadour poetry and *courtly love* is controversial. Arguments for and against this issue are given by María Rosa Menocal in *The Arabic Role in medieval Literary History* (1987).

The fact that the two lovers mastered Latin and preferred it as their private language: ”furent amdui si bien apris/ que bien surent parler latin/ et bien escrivre en parchemin,/ et cunseillier oant la gent/ en latin, que nus nes atent.” (they were both so skilled that they could speak Latin well, write well on parchment and converse in Latin so that none of those

[68] The name variations that appear from one version to another are a debate of its own. Of space reasons, I cannot go into detail about them in the present study, but I will note the differences and where they occur.
[69] According to Robert Bossuat, Naples must be Niebla, capital of a small muslim kingdom in the 12th century (conquered by muslims in 713 and by Alfonso X in 1262) and situated 30 km from Seville. The Old Norse word Aples must have followed the Old French word Naples.

who heard them could understand them) (vss. 104-108, ms. V) can be interpreted as the foreignness of Latin at a presumably Arabic-speaking court (Kinoshita 2003: 227).

The names of the children: Floire (Flower) and Blancheflor (White Flower) are inspired by a Christian tradition in carrying flowers to the church on Palm Sunday (OF Paske Flourie), the day they were both born. The king agreed to call his son Floire/ Flóres because the Christian woman had told him about the meaning of the religious celebration: "Li dui enfant, quant furent né,/ de la feste furent apelé:/ la crestiene, pur l'onur/ de la feste, mist Blancheflur/ num a sa fille, et li reis Floire/ a sun filz quant sot la stoire." (vss. 39-44, ms. V).[70]

"En pálmsunnudagr heitir blómapáskir á útlǫndum, þfvíat þá bera menn blóm sér í hǫndum." (chapter II, 7)

Palm Sunday is called Flower Easter abroad, because (then) people carry flowers in their hands.

The saga writer gives a more elaborate account of the Christian celebration and of the naming than the romance writer does. Such a technique is called 'writer intervention', or what we, in modern terms, would call translator's note or digression (Berdal 1985). It seems the writer considered it important to introduce the new concept to the Norse audience (readers) and took the liberty of incorporating it in the text. The celebration commemorates Jesus' entrance in Jerusalem when he was met by children waving branches in bloom.[71]

Breastfeeding was not allowed by the king. The Christian woman could foster the child, but not breastfeed him. Thus Floire was brought up as a Christian:

"En fyrir því at en kristna kona var svá vitr, þá fengu þau henni sveininn at fóstra at ǫllu, nema eigi vildu þau, at hann drykki kristinnar konu brjóst, ok fengu til þess heiðna konu; en annars konar fœddiz hann upp við kristinn sið allan (chapter II, 9).

Because the Christian woman was so wise, they gave her the (king's) son to foster in all respects, but they did not want him to drink from the Christian woman's breat, so they got a heathen woman to (do) this; otherwise, the (Christian) woman brought him up as a Christian.

There were certain laws concerning breastfeeding in the Middle Ages. The laws were common for both Christians, Muslims and Jews and they forbode mixing races and religions (Grieve 1997). Leclanche's explanation of this prohibition is, besides the ethical aspect of the medieval view on breatsfeeding, a religious pretext used by the author in order to prevent any interpretation of the children's love affair as incestuous (Leclanche 2003: 13).

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[70] In order to mean 'flower' the name 'Floire' should have been spelt 'flor', 'flour' or 'flur' in Old French, but one theory as to why the author used 'Floire' is that it probably rhymed with 'estoire'. This opinion was expressed by Trond Kruke Salberg in one of our supervising sessions.

[71] The custom is common nowadays in both Catholic and Orthodox churches.

The price which was paid for Blancheflor – among which there were the Benevento silks, oriental purple cloaks and indigo tunics – points towards the polyglot, seafaring world in which 'people and goods, books and ideas travelled freely from one end of the Mediterranean to the other. The Textile industry, along with the slave trade – which Blancheflor's selling is a part of – was one of the main enterprises bringing Christian and Muslim traders together (Kinoshita 2003: 229-230).

The dialogue between Floire and Blancheflor's mother is longer in manuscript V. This part, which is missing from the other manuscripts and the saga, also includes the mother's lament for her own sad fate:

–"Laisse! fait ele triste e pensive, a bon dreit me claime l'un chaitive! En mult mal ure fu jo nee et mult oi dure destinee! Mult ai plus mal que jo ne di!" (vss. 422-426, ms. V 1980)	Alas! she cried sadly and thoughtful, they justly call me miserable! I was born to misery and I was destined to endure much! Much more than I can tell!

Both the romance and the saga condemn suicide and express it through the advice given by Floire's mother. This is one of the many pieces of advice bearing a moralizing message. The queen's tearful supplication is more elaborate in the romance. The same message is kept in both the romance and the saga:

"– Beau filz, fait ele, mult es enfanz quant ta mort es desiranz. N'ad sucel hom, si a murir de la mort poüst resortir, [...] (vss. 562-565, ms. V) "Filz, de mort suffrir n'est mie gas. Et si vus vus occiez, en champ fluri pas ne vendrez ne ne verrez Blancheflur: cel champ ne receit pecheür. Enfer sun chalange i metreit: La en irrez, beau filz, tut dreit. (vss. 569-575, ms. V)	"Son minn", sagði hon, "bernsligt er slíkt, at girnaz svá mjǫk dauða, þvíat engi er svá vesall, at hann flýi eigi dauða sinn, ef hann má. Er þat ok en mesta skǫmm, at drepa sik sjálfr; enda á sá aldri Blómstrarvǫll, er þat gerir, ok aldri finnr þú Blankiflúr, þvíat sá vǫllr tekr við þeim einum, er eigi verðr sjálfr sér at skaða: tekr helvíti við þeim, ok svá mundi við þér, ef þú hefðir nú gǫrt þinn vilja." (chapter VIII, 17, 18, AM 575a 4to)	"My son", she said, " it is childish to wish your death, so strongly! No one is so miserable that one would not escape death if one could. And it is the greatest dishonour to kill oneself. Besides, never will one who does so see the Field of Flowers, because the Field (Paradise) only welcomes those who do not hurt themselves. Hell takes those who sin, and it would have taken you as well, had you followed your will. (A combined translation of both passages.)

When neither Barbarin the magician nor the ferocious lions managed to put an end to Floire's torment, his mother tried to comfort him by saying that she might know of a remedy that could bring Blancheflor back, by that implying that she was not dead:

"Meis, cher filz, or te recunforte, ainz l'avras vive que morte. Jo qui trover tel medicine par que revivrat la meschine." (vss. 586-589, ms. V)	"Huggaztu nú, son minn, ok lifi, þvíat þú munt enn finna Blankiflúr, annathvárt lifandi eða dauða; ok ek hygg, at ek vita þar lækning til, þá sem nœgja mun, at hon mun lifna." (chapter VIII, 19, ms. AM 575a 4to)	Console yourself now, my son, and live, because you can still find Blancheflor, dead or alive; and I believe I know of a medicine strong enough to bring her back to life. (A combined translation of

both passages.)

The Christian formula, ”for God-almighty”, ”for God’s sake”: ”[...] pur Deu le grant” (vs. 592, ms. V)/ ”fyrir þess guðs sakir, er vit trúum á” (chapter IX, 1, ms. AM 575a 4to), which we assume was used to imply Floire’s following conversion, cannot possibly refer to the same when used by the pagan queen (Leclanche 49: 2003). The queen uses a similar formula again in verse 624, ms. V: ”Beau filz, dit ele, pur Deu, merci! (Dear son, she says, for God, have mercy!). Other clear allusions to the Christian God follow in the French romance, but they are left out in the saga. When he finds out the truth about Blancheflor, Floire praises and blesses God: ”Deu rent graces, si l’en mercie” (vs. 632, ms. V). Floire seems to do so in all other invocations of God, as in vs. 1656, ms. A in the same edition: ”mais a mon Diu pri [...]” (I pray to my God), though he is more cautious and invokes all gods before the pontoneer of Babylon: ”de tut ses deus l’ad salué” (vs. 1129, ms. V).

Eva R. Hoffman’s study on medieval Mediterranean suggests that exchanges of objects such as metalwork, ivories and silk participated in a rivalry played out through commerce and diplomacy rather than military conflict. The constant traffic of people and goods, at court level through gifts and at merchant-class level through trade sustained a delicate balance of power. This mapped a common visual language across cultural and religious boundaries (Hoffman 2001: 21-22). Following Hoffman’s theory, Kinoshita believes Blancheflor is such an object that was trafficked across the Mediterranean and ’sold for a king’s ransom in gold’ becoming the site of contest where the values of al-Andalus, Fatimid Egypt and Latin Europe meet and are put to the test. Like the precious objects circulating along Hoffman’s pathways of portability, Blancheflor remaps networks of power wherever she goes (Kinoshita 2003: 231).

What is notable in the dialogue between Floire and his second host is the latter’s greeting: ”May God help you find your sweetheart” expressed in Old French in manuscript A: ”Jesus vos renge vostre amie!” (vs. 1480), in manuscript B: ”Diex vous rende la vostre amie!” (vs. 1294) and in the saga, in both manuscript AM 489 4a: ”[...] ok láti guð þik henni ná [...]” (chapter 10) and AM 575a 4to: ” [...] ok láti guð þik henni ná!” (chapter XIII, 5). The name Jesus in manuscript A is an allusion to the Christian God. The saga does not give any such hints. Are we to believe that the author again alluded to Floire’s future conversion? Manuscript V does not have this line. Where did the saga translator get this line from, then?

On the way to Babylon, Floire heard people talking about Blancheflor at a market. She had travelled the same way. The third day at dawn they came to an arm of sea to a country called Lenfer, and on the other side there was Mount Félis,: ”Al terz jur, devant

vesprer, /parvindrent a un braz de mer;/ Lenfer l'anument el païs. De l'autre part est Munt Felis," (vss. 1051-1054, ms. V).[72] In the Old Norse saga there is no name for the country they came to, but the name of the mountain is kept the same: "Því næst kómu þeir at sundi einu; en ǫðru megin sundsins var fjall eitt, er Felis hét."[73] (chapter XIV, 1, AM 575a 4to). The water was too deep and the streams too powerful, so there was no bridge over the water, but a horn was hanging on a pile on the beach so that whoever wanted to cross over to the other side could blow it. On the mountain, there was a rich castle where the ferryboat-people lived.

The sign Floire got from the ferryman for his friend, the rich pontoneer, was a ring:

Cest men anel li porterez de mai part, si li dirrez qu'il vus cunseillt cum meuz purrad. Jo quid qu'il vus herbergerrad." (vss. 1113-1116, ms. V)	Give him this ring from me and tell him to advise you the best he can. I believe he will host you.	"[...] Tak fingrgull mitt, ok fáið honum þat til jartegna, at hann taki við yðr vel!" (chapter XIV, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to)	Take my ring, and give it to him as a sign that he should treat you well!

Another minor difference, which could be a simple translation mistake is the omission of the moment when the pontoneer gave Floire his own ring, so his wife should know to treat them well.[74]

The French romance elaborates the episode by a few more lines on how Floire is taken to the city and shown the tower: "Et puis li ad mustré sa tur." (vs. 1140, ms. V – And then he showed him his tower).

Now that he has arrived in the city where he longed to be, Floire is in great need for advice, because he does not know how to go about looking for Blancheflor. Although manuscript V stops before the rhetorical dialogue above, which the saga only turns into a monologue, it does follow the dialogue between Floire and the host closely. Again, the narrative parts are kept entirely. The lyrical ones are reduced or omitted, as above.

–"Damoisiax sire, gentix hom, estes vos de rien coureciés? En'estes vos bien herbergiés? Se rien veés qui vos desplaise,	"Young sir, nobleman, are you annoyed by anything? Are you not well treated? If you see anything that displeases you, it will	"Lávarðr", kvað hann, "mislíkar þér herbergit, eðr hví ertu reiðr? En ef þér þykkir nǫkkut áfátt nú, þá skulum vér yfirbœta eptir fremsta megni."	"Sir," he said, "do you dislike the accomodation, or why are you sad (angry)? But if you think something is missing now, we shall remediate it the best we can."

[72] Leclanche refers to a study by Charles François, who suggests that the name *Lenfer* or *l'Enfer* (Hell) could come from a misspelling of the word *El Fern*, an indigenous name of the Syrian Oronte river (Leclanche 2003: 75). The name might have seemed unfamiliar to the Norse translator who ignored it.
[73] In translation, *Mount Felis* would be the *Mountain of Happiness*.
[74] In the Old Norse saga, the pontoneer is called gate-keeper, but that can create confusion with the gate-keeper of the Tower of Maidens which will be introduced a little bit later in the story.

amendé iert, se j'en ai aise." –"Sire, fait il, vos dites bien, vostre merci. Mais nule rien d'endroit l'ostel ne me desplaist, mais a mon Diu pri qu'il me laist, biaus dous sire, guerredoner vostre ostage, vo bel parler. Sire, dist il, jou sui pensis de mon marcié que j'ai enquis. Molt par m'en criem que jou nel truisse et, se le truis, k'avoir nel puisse." (vss. 1648-1662, ms. A 1980)	be remediated, if I have the opportunity." "Sir," he says, "you speak kindly, thank you. Nothing with regard to (your) hospitality displeases me, but I pray to my God, to let me, dear kind sir, to return your hospitality, your good words." "Sir," he said, "I am thoughtful about my merchandise I have looked for. Deeply I fear that I am not going to find it, and if I find it, that I will not be able to have it.	"Flóres svarar: "Vel gez mér at ǫllu hér, ok guð láti mik lifa til þess, at ek mega þetta meir með góðu gjalda. En ek em hugsjúkr um kaupeyri, ok óttumz, at eigi fá ek varning þann, er ek vilda kaupa; eðr, þóat ek finna, þá óttaz ek, at ek fá eigi keypt." (chapter XV, 5-6, ms. AM 575a 4to).	"Flóres answers: "I think highly of (appreciate) everything here, and may God let me live so that I can make up for this. But I am concerned about my merchandise, and I fear that I won't get the thing I would like to buy; even if I find it, I fear that I cannot buy (it)."

The saga names the two hosts, the lord and his lady: "Húsbóndinn hét Daires, en húsfrúin Lídernis" (chapter XV, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to).[75] Only manuscript B of the French version names them both in this place: "l'ostes Daires et Licoris" (vs. 1488, ms. B). They sit at the table and are served sumptuously with all sorts of food and fruit. Both manuscripts A and B give a detailed description of the meal, while the saga only notes that: "Þau létu þjóna sér ríkuliga, ok var þeim skenktr enn bezti drykkr; síðan var fram borit allskyns aldin ok krydd." (chapter XV, 9, ms. AM 575a 4to – they let themselves be richly served, and the best wine was poored for them, because many sorts of fruit and spices were brought in.)[76]

Babylon and the *Tower of Maidens* is introduced by Daires as a warning of what Floire has to go through to get to Blancheflor. Then he gives him his advice, but he believes it would be a dangerous and almost imposssible undertaking, and no king would manage to reach such a goal by any means: power, money or magic. The description is precisely the same in both the romance (manuscripts A and B) and in the saga. The emir has one hundred and fifty kings under his subordination and they could be at the emir's disposal any moment. Babylon was twenty miles long (OF): "Babiloine, [...] dure .XX. liues de tos sens (vss. 1787-1788, ms. A)/ ten miles long (ON): "En Babilón er X rasta lǫng" (chapter XVI,

[75] In manuscript AM 489 4to, the names of the host and the houselady were Daries and Toris: "Húsbóndi hèt Daries, en húsfrú hèt Toris" (chapter 12). The dialogue between Amor and Floire is not present in this manuscript. The only reference to this moment is that Floire became sad: "ok var Þá mjök óglaðr." (chapter 12).

[76] Some of the names of food in the Old French version are difficult to translate, but they were served, among others: "et vollilles et venison./ Lardés de cerf et de sengler [...] grues et gantes et hairons,/ pertris, bistardes [...]" (vss. 1678-1679, vss. 1681-1682 ms. A – poultry and game. Lumps of deer and wild boar [...] cranes and wild geese and heron, partridge, bustard [...]). Among the fruit the ate were: "puns de grenat, figes et poires [...] peskes, castaignes a plenté," (vs. 1687, vs. 1689, ms. A – pomegranate, figs and pears [...] peaches, loads of chestnuts).

4, ms. AM 575a 4to), and the rampart was very high and strong enough to resist steel-peaks. Around it there were twentyseven gates with a strong with strong towers over each of them. Inside the Babylon there were more than seven hundred towers (OF): ”a tors faites plus de .VII. cens” (vs. 1800, ms. A)/ four hundred castles (ON): ”En innan í borginni eru IIII hundruð kastala” (chapter XVI, 5, ms. AM 575a 4to). The emir’s vassals lived there: ”u mainent li baron casé” (vs. 1801, ms. A)/ (ON) one hundred knights lived in each of them: ”ok í hverjum C riddara” (id.). Manuscript AM 489 4to gives the same figures as the French manuscript: ”en í borginni eru vij C kastala” (chapter 12 – seven hundred castles).

In the middle of Babylon, there is the *Tower of Maidens*. Its size and construction is impressive. It is build of green marble: (OF) ”Tote est de vert quarrel de marbre” (vs. 1815, ms. A)/ (ON) ”ok gǫrr af grœnum marmarasteini” (chapter XIV, 6, ms. AM 575a 4to). The sphere on the top of it was made of pure gold (OF): ”li torpins est desus d’or mier.” (vs. 1818, ms. A)/ (ON) of red gold: ”en knapprinn er af rauðu gulli” (chapter XIV, 6, ms. AM 575a 4to). In the sphere there is a brilliant stone, an escarboucle that shines by night like the sun by day: ”uns escarboucles qui resplent; [...] par nuit reluist comme solel. (vs. 1824, vs. 1826, ms. A)/ ”En í knappinum er karbunculus, steinn sá, er skínn um nótt sem sól um dag;” (chapter XIV, 7, AM 575a 4to). There are three floors in the tower, all made of marble (white marble ON) and are not sustained by any pillers. The two superior floors are only sustained by an interior piller which goes from the groundfloor and up to the top of the tower: (OF) ”En cele tor a trois estages. [...] Li pavement de marbre sont,/ ne nul soustenement nen ont/ les .II. desus fors d’un piler/ qui par celi estuet passer;/ li pilers sort du fondement,/ dusqu’a l’aguille en haut s’estent.” (vss. 1839, 1841-1846, ms. A)/ (ON) ”Þrenn gólf, hvert upp af ǫðru, eru af marmarasteini, ok engi stólpi heldr þeim upp [...] steinstólpar standa umhverfis innan allt af enu nezta gólfinu ok upp undir et efsta þak; en þeir eru af hvítum marmara. ” (chapter XVI, 8, AM 575a 4to). There is also a magnificent system by which the water is conveyed up and down the tower by means of a canal: (OF) ”dedens a un bien fait canal/ par desus monte une fontaine (vss. 1848-1849, ms. A), ”dedenz est bien fez uns chanax” (vs. 1656, ms. B). The Old Norse translator has interpreted *canal* or *chanax* as *cheval* (fr. horse), misunderstanding that led to further changes in the text (such as a silver horse placed in the middle of each floor, from the mouth of which the clearest cold water ran) so as to preserve the meaning: (ON) ”En þá er hestr gǫrr af silfri á miðju gólfinu hverju, ok rennr or munni honum et skírasta vatn kalt” (chapter XVI, 9, AM 575a 4to). On the superior floor there are the beautifully decorated rooms. The number of rooms differs from the French to the Norse versions: one hundred and forty (seven score) (OF): ”Et es estages cambres a dusc’a .VII. vins;” (vss. 1859-1860, ms. A), ”En la tour .VII^{XX}.

chambres a" (vs. 1667, ms. B)/ (ON) forty "En XL klefa eru í turninum" (chapter XVI, 10, AM 575a 4to) or fifteen "XV klefar eru í þeim turni" (chapter 13, AM 489 4to).[77] In each room there was a virgin that the emir had chosen after his own taste. That's why the tower is called the *Tower of Maidens.* Two of them serve him every morning. The translation into Old Norse is more or less faithful to mansucripts A and B:

En la tor .VII.^{XX} puceles qui molt sont avenans et beles; de grant parage sont iceles, por çou qu'eles sont forment beles. La tors u sont les damoiseles a a non la Tors as Puceles. Trestoutes celes qui i sont .II. et .II. son service font, iceles .II. que il eslit, a son lever et a son lit; l'une sert de l'eve doner et la touaile tient son per. (vss. 1891-1902, ms. A)	In the tower there are seven score (140) maidens who are foreign and very beautiful. They are (must be) high-born, if they are so beautiful. The tower where the maidens are has the name the *Tower of Maidens*. All the maidens who are there serve two by two. The two whom he chooses assist him when he get up and when he goes to bed; one of them gives him water and the other one holds his towel.	En í turninum eru XL meyja, ok allar stórbornar, ok því heitir hann meyja turn; en þær skulu jafnan þjóna honum, sem hann tekr til at hverri jafnlengð; ok þá er hann ríss upp um morguninn, þá skulu þær í koma til hans, ǫnnur með mundlaug, en ǫnnur með handklæði. (chapter XVI, 12, AM 575a 4to).	In the tower there are forty maidens, all of them high-born, and that's why it is called the *Tower of Maidens;* and there, the same will serve him, the ones whom he chooses regularly; and when he has woken up in the morning they will then come up to him, one with a washing basin and one with a towel.

There are similarities between the translation and manuscripts A and B, from the point where manuscript V stops and onwards. The similarity with manuscript A is proved by details like the guardians of the tower, who are described as eunuchs in both cases: (OF) "Les gardes qui en la tor sont/ les genitaires pas nen ont." (vss. 1903-1904, ms. A)/ (ON) "En þeir, er varðveita turninn, eru allir geldingar" (chapter XVI, 13, AM 575a 4to). Manuscript B, on the other hand, describes the guardians as follows: "Les guetes qui en la tor sont/ chaucune nuit grant noise font." (vss. 1707-1708, ms. B – The guardians in the tower, make a lot of noise every night).

The gatekeeper of the tower is very mean, and he guards the doors (regularly): "Li mastins est fel deputaire./ Cil qui garde l'uis de la tour " (vss. 1910-1911, ms. A), "Li mestre est fel et deputere/ et si garde l'uis de la tour" (vss. 1714-1715, ms. B)/ En hann er íllr í sér, ok hann gætir dyranna jafnan" (chapter XVI, 14, AM 575a 4to). His apartment is by the door and if someone comes to spy or so, he is immediately killed. Manuscript A has extra lines about the gatekeeper, which are not present in neither manuscript B nor the saga.

[77] Leclanche translates VII^{XX} as 'cent quarante' which is 'one hundred and forty', that is seven score. Birgit Nyborg quotes Birte Carlé and Eugen Kölbing and explains that "VII.XX. puceles = 27 jomfruer" (Nyborg 2005:76). Carlé and Kölbing are wrong, and I opt for Leclanche's interpretation. Without a doubt, the number of rooms as well as all other figures concerning the size of the tower are a confusing matter.

In those lines, the gatekeeper is presented as a smart man, who is greatly loved by the emir. Four men guard the tower, two by night and two by day, and they are always armed. Notwithstanding this, Floire is willing to die for Blancheflor. He is advised by Daire to pretend he is a skilled master, an architect who came to measure the tower so he could build a similar one. This will impress the gatekeeper who will then ask him to play chess. Floire wins all chess games, but he is advised to show his generosity and reward the gatekeeper with a lot of gold and silver and other gifts. Floire proves to be a skillful chess-player and even Daire seems certain he will win the game. Mastering a game of chess might have been a prerequisite of all noble men. Floire should show both his superiority and his courtly generosity by staking first one hundred ounces gold: ”C. onces d’or” (vs. 2134, ms. A, vs. 1901, ms. B)/ ”C aura gulls” (chapter XVII, 6, AM 575a 4to), then the double sum, and by giving the gatekeeper all the money at stake every time he wins.

Floire does exactly as he is told, and the third day, he brings along four hundred ounces gold and the goblet: ”IV. onces d’or [...] et (vostre) coupe” (vss. 2157-2158, ms. A), ”Quatre cenz onces l’endemain/ et vostre coupe en vostre main” (vss. 1926-1927, ms. B)/ ”C marka gulls til taflsins, ok ker þitt” (chapter XVII, 8, AM 575a 4to – one hundred gold marks for the table-game (chess) and your goblet). Floire wins the third game of chess as well and gives the gatekeeper the gold, but does not stake the goblet. When he does not want to play any longer, the gatekeeper invites him to dinner and treats him with tremendus respect. He longs for the golden goblet and would pay one thousand gold marks ”mil mars” (vs. 2174, ms. A, vs. 1943, ms. B)/ ”Þúshundrað marka gulls.” (chapter XVII, 10, AM 575a 4to). Floire is advised to offer him the goblet in exchange for his friendship and homage:

”Dont li dites rien n’en prendrés, mais par amistiés li donrés. Dont par ert il si deceüs et de vostre amor embeüs que de joie a vos piés karra et homage vos offerra. Et vos, en prendés bien l’omage et la fiance s’estes sage. Lors vos tenra il a amor com li hom liges son signor.” (vss. 2175-2184, ms. A)[78]	Then you tell him that you will not take anything from him, but that you will give it to him in exchange for his friendship. Then, he will feel so obliged and intoxicated by the love for you, that he will fall at your feet with joy, and he will do you homage. And you will accept his homage and oath, if you are wise. Then he will treat you with the love a man renders his seigneur (lord).	En þú seg, at þu vilt eigi selgja honum, nema heldr gefa. En þá muntu verða honum svá ástfolginn, at hann mun falla til fóta þér ok geraz þinn maðr. En þú tak gjarna viðr honum ok lát hann handselja þér sína hollustu ok slíkan tryggleik, sem maðr skal vinna sínum herra. (chapter XVII, 10-11, AM 575a 4to).	And you (will) say that you don’t want to sell, but rather give it to him. Then he will become so obliged to you, that he will fall at your feet and become your man. You must then accept and let him assure you of his faithfulness and such support (security) that a man shall show his lord.

[78] Manuscript B is similar.

The gatekeeper accepts the cup and binds himself to Floire's service. The formal acknowledgement of allegiance, where he declares himself Floire's man, takes place in the emir's apple garden (ON):

Il l'en maine sans atargier esbanoier ens el vergier. As piés li ciet, offre s'oumage; Flores le prent, si fait que sage. (vss. 2241-2244, ms. A)[79]	Without delay, he takes Floire to relax (have fun) in the garden. He falls to his feet and offers him his homage. Floire accepts it, and he acts wisely (by doing so).	En síðan tók hann við kerinu ok þakkaði honum. En síðan leiddi hann Flóres út í þann enn góða eplagarðinn ok sýndi honum þá dýrð alla, sem þar var. (chapter XVII, 25, AM 575a 4to).	And then he took the goblet and thanked him. Then he took Flóres out in the (once more) fine apple garden and swore to him by all the precious things that were there.

When Floire tells the gatekeeper about his real errand, the gatekeeper feels betrayed, but he cannot take back his oath. He advised Floire to come back after three nights and he filled a basket with flowers for each (maid) (OF): "Une corbeille a a cascune," (vs. 2301, ms. A), "Plaine corbeille en a chascune" (vs. 2094, ms. B)/ twelve baskets (ON): "XII laupa stóra" (chapter XVIII, 7, AM 575a 4to) which were sent to the maids's rooms. Camouflaged under a red cloak, Floire was sent up to Blancheflor in her basket, but the eunuchs took the basket to the wrong room, i.e they went past the one to the right, which was Blancheflor´s, and went into the one to the left: "la Blancheflor lessent a destre,/ en une autre entrent a senestre." (vss. 2114-2115, ms. B)/ the one to the right instead of the one to the left (ON): "þeir viku til hœgri handar, en klefi Blankiflúr var til vinstri handar;" (chapter XVIII, 9, AM 575a 4to). That was Elóris's room. In the saga, Elóris appears without a presentation, which comes in the next chapter. Floire jumps out of the basket and Elóris startles and starts crying. The other maids overhear, and she is forced to make up an explanation so as not to turn in Floire, whom she understands is Blancheflor's lover. She tells the maids that she was startled by a butterfly that flew out of the flower basket.[80] When the other maidens have left her, the author of the French romance tells us that she is Blancheflor's companion and the daughter of a German duke: "a un duc d'Alemaigne" (vs. 2151, ms. B)/ "jarls af Saxlandi" (chapter XIX, 1, AM 575a 4to)[81]. Her name is Gloris: "Gloris ot non la damoisele" (vs.

[79] Manuscript B does not mention that the host falls to Floire's feet, but, otherwise, the passage is similar. The saga translator does not mention it either, which can be interpreted as another example of the saga's similarity to B.

[80] According to Patricia Grieve (1997), this episode is similar in the French and Norse versions, but in the Spanish chronicle and in the Dutch version, a bird flies out of the basket and startles Blancheflor.

[81] Manuscript A says she is the daughter of a German king: "au roi d'Alemaigne" (vs. 2358). It is clear that the translation is closer to B.

2373, ms. A), ”Claris ot non la damoisele.” (vs. 2166, ms. B). The girls were affectionate towards each other, and they served the emir together. [82]

The translation of the dialogue in the saga is faithful to manuscript B of the romance. When Gloris amusingly interrupts their emotional encounter to assure them that she will keep their secret, manuscript A says: ”Molt esteroit vostre anemie/ qui vos en feroit departie.” (It would be your enemy, she who would separate you – vss, 2435-2436). The same lines appear in manuscript B as follows: ”Moult seroit, ce cuit, vostre amie/ a cui en ferïez partie.” (It certainly seems it is your female-friend you want to share the flower(s) with – vss. 2226-2227). The French author metaphorically refers to Floire as (OF) *la flor* (the flower) earlier in the romance, and he uses the feminine form of the pronoun *la* in manuscript B.[83] In this case, it is clear that, unless the V manuscript had the same lines, the saga translator could have translated from a copy similar to manuscript B (considering the feminine form implied by the association with a female-friend): ”Vina mín, kennir þú nú blómit þetta, er fyrir skǫmmu vildir þú eigi sjá? Víst væri sú góð vina þín, at þú gæfir hlutskipti af þessu blómi!” (”My friend, do you know this flower whom, a short while ago, you did not want to see? Certainly, it must be your good female-friend you want to share these flowers with-chapter XIX, 6, AM 575a 4to). Blancheflor/Blankiflúr answers: ”ja est çou Flores, mes amis!” (vs. 2438, ms. A), ”Ja est ce Floires, mes amis!” (vs. 2229, ms. B)/ ”Vina, ” sagði Blankiflúr, ”Þetta er Flóres, unnasti minn!” (”My friend”, said Blankiflúr, ”this is my sweetheart, Flóres.” – chapter XIX, 6, AM 575a 4to). Since we are told earlier in the saga that Elóris realized it was Blancheflor’s sweetheart, these lines could only be interpreted as an amusing manner in which Elóris wanted to interrupt their tender moment together, and not as a confusion caused by Floire’s feminine features. This will prove to be the case when the emir’s servant finds them lying in bed together.

The emir’s feelings of hatred and jealousy are expressed equally in both the romance and the saga:

A l’amirant la coulor mue, crient que home n’ait o sa drue: –”Aportez moi, fet il, m’espee, s’irai veoir cele assemblee. Ahi! Claris? Tu es failliz!” [...] ne croit que nus osast s’amie amer, tant fust de haut	The emir turns pale. He fears that a man has his beloved: ”Bring me my sword, he says, I will go and see this couple. Oh! Claris? See, you are wrong!” [...] he did not believe	Skipti konungr nú litum, var hann stundum rauðr sem blóð, en stundum bleikr. Hann tók sverð sitt ok vill nú sjá þetta: ”Þvíat miskent hefir þú Elóris,” sagði konungr, ”Þvíat hon var nú rétt hér; mun þar kominn nǫkkurr karlmaðr;	The king now changed colour, he was red as blood for a while and pale for another. He took his sword and wanted to see this (for himself): ”You were wrong about Elóris,” the king said, ”because she has just been here.” Some man must have

[82] We are told exactly the same thing in the beginning of chapter 19 in the saga.
[83] Manuscript A uses the form *le*.

parage. (vss. 2402-2406, 2409-2410, ms. B)[84]	that someone would dare love his beloved, even if he were of a noble rank.	munda ek þó hyggja, at engi mundi svá djarfr vera, at hana skyldi þora at elska." (chapter XX, 10, AM 575a 4to).	come in; I don't believe that someone were so audacious, that he would dare love her.

There is no further account of Elóris in the saga from this point on. In the French romance Gloris/Claris marries the emir and remains his permanent wife.

Floire bids the emir wait until the vassals (all earls and kings under the emir's subordination) arrive to judge them. The king agrees, believing that they will get a harsher punishment. Until then, he keeps them locked and orders forty men to guard over them. When the earls and kings arrive, they are told what happened, are asked to judge the couple and give their verdict. A wise old man, King Marsilias ("Marsilías konungr", named only in the ON version), was chosen as a spokesperson for all other kings.[85] He asked them all to be just and fair. Floire and Blancheflor were allowed to plead in their defence. One earl, named Praten ("Práten jarl") in the ON version, and "dans Yliers, rois de Nubie" (Dan Ylier, king of Nubie, vss. 2759-2760, ms. A), "dant Gaifiers, rois de Nubie" (vss. 2548-2549, ms. B) is against this fair trial and suggests a shameful death.[86] King Marsilias manages to persuade them of the importance of a trial. In the meantime, in the French romance, there is a long dialogue between Floire and Blancheflor on their way to the trial place. They declare their love towards each other and want the other to have the ring given by Floire's mother, ring which was supposed to protect them from dying. For space reasons, I only quote some lines from this dialogue, manuscript A (this dialogue is also present in manuscript B):

"Bele, or avons de mort paor, [...] (vs. 2780)	"Sweetheart, now we fear death [...]"
Se jou ne venisse en la tor,	"If I had not come to the tower, you wouldn't have
n'eüssiés pas ceste dolor. (vs. 2785-2786)	experienced this pain."
Par vos ne fu çou pas, amie.	"It was not meant that you, my sweetheart, should
Or en perdrés por moi la vie. (vss. 2787-2788)	now lose your life for me."
Bele, vostre anel bien gardés,	"Sweetheart, take great care of your ring; you will not
ne morrés pas tant com l'arés." (vss. 2793-2794)	die while you have it."
–"Amis, dist el, tort avés grant! (vs. 2795)	
Vos venistes en ceste terre	"Sweetheart," she said, "you are wrong!"
trestot seulement por moi querre. (vss. 2799-2800)	"You came to this country only to look for me.
morir por vos por çou deüsse. (vs. 2804)	"I should then die for you."
Biaus amis, vostre anel vos rent,	"Sweetheart, I give you (back) your ring, because I
car par lui ne voel pas garir	don't want it to protect me, while watching you die."
par si que vos voie morir." (vss. 2806-2808)	She sees (understands) that he will not catch it, but
Ele voit nel prendra noient,	she threw it with discomfort.
dont l'a jeté par maltalent.	A duke, who heard them, caught it. When he had the

[84] Manuscript A is similar.
[85] King Marsilie is also the name of a Saracen king residing in Saragossa as it appears in *La Chanson de Roland*.
[86] Leclanche notes that the archaic title *dan*, *dam*, *dant* (DOMINE) is generally ironic or scorning. It is often used in epic formulae, and it has feudal connotations, opposed to courtly formulae as: *biaus sire*, *frere*, *amis*... (2003: 145). These connotations are not translated into Old Norse.

Un dus le prist, qui l'entendi,
quant l'anel tint, molt s'esjoï (vss. 2815-2118)

ring, he was very happy.

The saga ignores the dialogue (or maybe it did not exist in manuscript V) and focuses most on the discussion around a fair trial:

"En þat sýniz mér um þetta sem ǫnnur mál, er í dóm eru lǫgð, at vér heyrum hvárstveggja mál, sœkjanda ok verjanda, ok heyrum vernd hins, er ásakaðr er; skiptir mest um slík mál, er við liggr sœmð ok líf; er ok ósagt frá, ef einn segir. Konungr, látið þau hingat koma, ok heyrum, hvárt þau hafa þetta verk gǫrt fyrir ǫfundar sakir eða háðungar: þá skulu þau hafa enn háðuligsta dauða, at annarr variz við at gera slíkt; en ef honum fylgja nǫkkur sannindi eða skynsemð, þá verðum vér gørr á at líta." (chapter XXII, 5, AM 575a 4to).

"But I believe, in this and in other cases put to trial, that we (should) hear both parts speak, both the plaintiff and the defendant, and hear the defence speech of the accused; especially in such a case, about honour and life; (much) it remains unsaid if only one part speaks. King, let them come here and let's hear if they have done this out of hatred (envy) or dishonour; then they will have a most shameful death, so others can learn to refrain from doing so; but if he is followed by some truth or wisdom, then we must be ready to look at the case."

In the French romance, the dialogue between the spokesperson (ON King Marsilias) and dans Yliers/ dant Gaifiers, is much shorter. In fact, there is not much focus on the trial, and the spokesperson is not convincing as to the importance of a fair trial. Considering that what Floire did was a severe matter, it was decided they they should be burnt.

The conversion to Christianity of pagan Spain seems, throughout the romance, to have happened in a diplomatic manner, with the exception of the base-born people who denied conversion. Thus, for the readers/ listeners of *Floire et Blancheflor* the worldview that "pagans are wrong and Christians are right", i.e. the ideology of crusade and conquest, Floire's conversion provides a satisfying conclusion. As the father of Bertha Bigfoot, Floire transmits to Charlemagne a hereditary claim to rule a Christianized Spain (Kinoshita 2003: 232-233).

From the anonymous daughter of a French knight, Blancheflor becomes a Saracen queen who wins pagan Naples for Christianity and transmits a part-Saracen ancestry to medieval Europe's greatest historical-legendary figure (Kinoshita 2003: 233).

CHAPTER 7. Conclusions

What are the transformations undergone by the concept of *courtoisie* in the translated *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*?

I have shown, by referring to Leclanche's (1980) classification of the translations and versions of the *Conte* and the *Romance* into many European vernacular languages, that the story of Floire and Blancheflor was a very popular one. It reached Scandinavia first through the translated *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, which was then further translated into the Swedish *Flores och Blanzeflor* and into the Danish *Eventyret om Flores og Blantzeflores*.

As Jürg Glauser underlines, along with the sagas of Icelandic prehistory (*fornaldarsögur*) and the lying sagas (*lygisögur*), the translated *riddarasögur* are among the narratives of Norwegian and Icelandic literature of the Middle Ages that have attracted least attention in the research community (Glauser 2005: 372). The saga of *Flóres ok Blankiflúr*, in general, and the parallel between the original French *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and the saga in particular, have not been devoted extensive studies as the other *riddarasögur* mentioned in connection with king Haakon Haakonsson's translation programme.

The idea of the present study has come from earlier assumptions that the *riddarasögur* leave out what is typically courtly. My intention, as the title (*Lost in translation?*) suggests, has been to question these claims and to come with arguments that the sagas only partially leave out the courtly aspects. Consequently, the focus of the comparative analysis has been on *courtoisie*. I have structured the analysis according to the definition given in chapter 5, namely that courtly behaviour and *courtly love* are two main semantic aspects of *courtoisie* (Frappier 1973: 3). On the one hand, the term *courtoisie* denoted an art of living, a fact of politeness, civilization, attentiveness towards the other, a science of manner and discourse, respect for women, bravery, liberty and most of all, care to refrain from what is evil or not noble. On the other hand, the concept of *courtoisie* also denoted an art of loving, representative of a certain elite: the noble, courteous man was he who knew how to love in a different manner than the common people.

I have also looked closer at how *fin'amor* applies to this particular romance and saga. Although Moshé Lazar's conclusion is that *fin'amor* remains adulterous beyond any doubt (Lazar 1989: 250-251), the conventions established by the *fin'amor* imply mutual faithfulness between the lady and the lover (Frappier 1973), which is also the case in the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* and *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*. In addition to that, in the courtly culture, one is loved for one's beauty and moral qualities: courtesy, generosity and courage. All these qualities seem to characterize the love between Floire/ Flóres and

Blancheflor/ Blankiflúr as well. *Fin'amor* is expressed in the saga in the same way as in the romance, namely through sorrow, lovesickness, fainting and suicide attempts.

As I have shown in the analysis above, the word *kurteiss*, the equivalent translation of *courtois* is not only preserved in the exact places as in the romance, but it is added in the saga in places where it is only implied in Old French. *Kurteiss* is used in connection with the fact of being Christian, beautiful, good-natured and educated. Besides the word *kurteiss*, the other connotations of the concept of *courtoisie* are preserved in the saga. Another addition is the moment that I pointed out in the analysis, namely the translator's intervention regarding the celebration of Palm Sunday celebration. Such additions and interventions reveal the Norse society's interest in the culture of Southern Europe.

Clear changes are noticeable in the reduction of the lyrical passages. Metaphors, allegories and symbols are generally reduced or transformed, but not entirely omitted. The elaborate rethorical language of the romance is much more simplified in the saga. The monologues are often turned into dialogues or expressed in the form of the character's thoughts. A certain degree of faithful translation is revealed with regard to the narrative parts and the dialogues, which are almost the same in the saga as in the romance. Another noteworthy tendency is to shorten passages, to make them more concise, although the same idea as in the romance is preserved.

I have also looked at the evolution of the romance which, according to Krueger (2000: 1), is one of translation and transformation, adaptation and refashioning, of fertile intertextual and intercultural exchange among the linguistic and political entities of medieval Europe. My intention with the discussion around *courtoisie* has been not only to show how the concept is treated and adapted in the translated *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, but also its implications and consequences for the medieval society of Europe in general, and of France and Norway in particular.

The thirteenth century was characterized by a mixture of courtly and Christian love ideology both in Norway and in Iceland. At the same time, the church created its own marriage ideology (Bandlien 2002: 49). The same historian sustains that it is not pure coincidence that *courtly love* and the church norms on love appear almost simultaneously, taking into account the fact that the *riddarasögur* came into being and sang the true, humble and eternal love which had marriage as the ultimate goal. The choice of translating the *Conte de Floire et Blancheflore* into a saga of chivalry must be seen in connection with this love ideology. The clerical tone of the romance is preserved entirely in the saga except for the end. The choice of the translator to turn the pathetic end of the romance into a chivalric one in the saga must be interpreted in the light of already existing patterns.

To sum up, the typical *courtly love* features that appear in the romances do appear in the saga, as well. Although they are relatively shorter, they do remain typical features of the *riddarasögur* as genre. The tendency to shorten the lyrical passages is found in both the English *Floris*, in the saga and the Swedish romance: the episode with Floire in Montoire, Floire's *planctus*, the description of the palfrey, the encounter with Daire. On the other hand, the saga is more faithful to the *Conte* with regard to the narrative parts and the dialogues. The typical *courtly love* features that appear in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* are painful expressions of grief caused by love like self-abuse, fainting, tear one's hair out and attempted suicide.

To conclude, the concept of *courtoisie* is not entirely, but only partially lost in the translation of *the Conte de Floire et Blancheflor* into *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*. This proves that the audience during the thirteenth century appreciated and understood *courtly love,* and there is evidence that the concept of *courtly love* was not an isolated phenomenon that appeared for a short period of time during the reign of king Haakon Haakonsson. *Courtly love* seemed to be a fashion that lasted for a long time in various art forms in the North.

The present study can be used in connection with further research on the introduction of European culture to the Norwegian elite in the form of translations of Old French texts. These texts must be studied not only as translations, but also as bearers of generic patterns and, therefore, as parts of the process of *Verschriftlichung*.

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